

St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100839
Local Authority	Southwark
Inspection number	285898
Inspection dates	11–12 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Christopher Gray

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms S Ben-Nathan
Headteacher	Mrs H Dacey
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2001
School address	Liverpool Grove Walworth London SE17 2HH
Telephone number	020 7703 4881
Fax number	020 7703 1601

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is of average size and serves an area of considerable deprivation. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is high and nearly one-quarter are at the early stage of learning English. Pupils with learning difficulties represent a smaller proportion of the school than usually found, though the percentage of pupils with statements of special education need is average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The overall effectiveness of the school is inadequate because a significant proportion of pupils make unsatisfactory progress in English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6. In mathematics, many pupils make good progress in Year 6, but the gap in their attainment is too large for them to catch up completely. This has been so for a number of years, but the school's leadership and management have not had sufficient impact on raising standards. Although there have been contributory factors to pupils' underachievement, such as difficulty in recruiting teaching staff, the school's self-evaluation is not sufficiently rigorous in tackling areas of unsatisfactory progress.

Children enter the Nursery with below average skills, which have been well below in some years. They make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage, but standards are still below average by the time they enter Year 1. By Year 2, standards are broadly average and sometimes a little above. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in Years 1 and 2. Their progress in reading and writing is good, but progress in mathematics is weaker. However, by Year 6, standards are below average because few pupils reach the higher levels. This means that pupils' overall achievement is inadequate.

Pupils' personal development is good. They behave well and have good attitudes to their learning. They know a lot about how to keep healthy and safe and are confident that any bullying will be well dealt with. They make good contributions to the school and local community. The school gives strong pastoral support to pupils and their families – as one parent wrote, 'The staff are friendly and helpful to parents and pupils.' Pupils with learning difficulties receive good support and make satisfactory progress. However, the academic guidance given to most pupils is not sufficiently effective in making sure that any underachievement is quickly identified and speedily remedied.

The curriculum is satisfactory because it is enriched by additional activities and promotes pupils' enjoyment and personal development. Teaching is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. However, teaching is inadequate overall because teachers in Years 3 to 6 do not always challenge pupils at an appropriate level or show them how to improve in their marking of pupils' work.

The headteacher and her staff work very hard to make the school the popular place that it is. However, leadership and management are inadequate overall because they have not ensured that pupils make sufficient progress over a number of years. The school knows its weaknesses but development planning lacks a clear indication of how they are to be remedied or monitored. This means that the school does not have the capacity to make the necessary improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics across the school and in English in Years 3 to 6.
- Enable teachers to make better use of assessment and marking in tracking all pupils' progress and in setting them work at the appropriate level of challenge, especially for higher ability pupils.

- Senior leaders and governors must make more effective use of self-evaluation in analysing areas of weakness, planning to improve them and monitoring the progress towards agreed measures of success.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Achievement is inadequate because significant proportions of pupils make too little progress in Years 3 to 6 in reading and writing. Pupils also make unsatisfactory progress in mathematics in Years 3 to 5. Good mathematics teaching in Year 6 enables most pupils to make good progress, but it is not enough to raise their standards as high as they should be, given the potential shown by their test results when they were in Year 2. This means that standards by Year 6 are below average, though, at Year 2, they were a little above. Children make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.

Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress overall and many individuals make good progress, because the school gives them good support, focused closely on their needs. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language achieve at similar rates to other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well being are good, as reflected in their good attitudes to school. Pupils are polite and keen to share their enjoyment of the school. They speak of their appreciation of the learning mentors and feel valued, safe and respected. In the words of one pupil, 'We're all like a big family here.' Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and are able to talk knowledgeably about the importance of a balanced diet. Attendance is satisfactory and improving.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is good. They behave well and show concern for the well-being of others. The school council takes on a leading role in representing pupils' views in a range of matters. They contribute well to their local community, for example, in addition to fund-raising for various charities the school choir performs in Southwark Cathedral. Pupils' good team work, their good attitudes to learning and their good use of information and communication technology (ICT) skills mean they are preparing satisfactorily for the next stage of education; their limited progress in literacy and numeracy prevents this from being better.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching and learning are inadequate because they do not enable pupils to make enough progress in English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6. This does not mean to say that all teaching is unsatisfactory. Pupils from all classes say they enjoy their lessons and often find them interesting. Reception children were fully focussed on their work about life-cycles because of the well-designed activities and the good dialogues between adults and children. Teachers use pupils' work and displays to create a good environment in the classrooms and corridors, which engages pupils in their learning and helps them to take pride in their work.

In Years 3 to 6, teachers do not plan lessons sufficiently well to challenge pupils at the right level. Pupils of all abilities are often given the same work. Sometimes, work is too easy. Pupils' books show that they are repeating work that they have already mastered without further developing their understanding and skills. This is especially so for higher ability pupils. On other occasions, tasks move on too swiftly, so that pupils do not have enough chance to consolidate what they have learnt. Learning objectives are explained to pupils and they spend time copying them into their books. However, the objective is not referred to in teachers' marking as a way of showing pupils how they might improve. Marking is also inconsistent between classes. In some, much work is unmarked and comments for development are few.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Extra activities, such as visits and visitors, add enjoyment and relevance to pupils' learning. The school is developing the links between subjects, though at present curriculum planning does not always meet the needs of all pupils in English and mathematics. Pupils particularly enjoy ICT, art, physical education and especially science, where 'We do more exciting things, and explore and investigate.' They appreciate the homework club, which has increased the proportion of pupils who complete their work. The curriculum provides well for pupils' personal development, such as visits by the police, the school nurse and a theatre group. These help to increase pupils' understanding of health and safety and raise their sense of self-esteem.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Pastoral support is very good, and elements, such as the outreach work to pupils' families, are exceptional. The school has worked hard to ensure that pupils are able to explore and express their feelings. This is supported by the good work of the learning mentors who are available for pupils to speak to if they have a problem. There are good procedures for dealing with behaviour problems - as one pupil observed, 'It makes us feel safe.' Arrangements for child protection and safeguarding are good.

The school has good procedures to assess pupils' progress, but the data are not analysed with sufficient rigour to spot underachievement and rectify it quickly. This is because the progress of particular groups, rather than every individual, is tracked. This enables some groups, such as pupils with learning difficulties, to make the progress expected of them, and sometimes more, but it does not highlight other pupils whose performance may begin to deteriorate.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The headteacher and her staff work effectively to create an environment in which pupils are happy and secure, and which parents rightly appreciate. The contribution which the school makes to pupils' personal development is considerable.

However, leadership and management are inadequate because they have not succeeded in reversing the considerable amount of underachievement in Years 3 to 6 over a number of years. Difficulties in recruiting staff have contributed. However, even now that a stable staff has been established, the process of development planning is not rigorous enough to take the school

forward. The development plan and subject action plans have general targets which do not directly address weaknesses. Planned actions give little detail of how targets are to be accomplished, and success criteria are restatements of targets, rather than measurable tests by which success can be recognised. This means that the process of self-evaluation is inadequate.

Governors support the school well and willingly give their time and expertise. But governance is unsatisfactory because the governors have not held the school sufficiently to account for the inadequate progress that pupils have made in Years 3 to 6.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
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	3
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?	4
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?	3

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?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

26 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter's Church of England Primary School, London, SE17 2HH

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and being so keen to give us all the help you could. It was good to speak to so many of you. I really liked it when children come to me to introduce themselves.

You and your parents say yours is a very happy school and we agree. You behave well and are very polite to visitors. I was very pleased to be asked to accompany one of you to the after-school club and very sorry I could not. You work hard in your lessons and most of you are neat workers in your books. The school looks after you well and gives lots of help to you and your parents.

However, many of you do not make as much progress in English and mathematics in the juniors as you should do. The standards you reach by the age of eleven could be higher, especially for those of you who learn the quickest. This means that the standard of education the school gives you needs to be improved, so we have decided that your school needs extra help in putting this right. We call this decision 'special measures' - measures is another word for actions.

We have asked the school to help you reach higher standards in English and mathematics, and to keep a close watch on the amount of progress everyone of you makes. Teachers will then be able to give each of you the right amount of challenge, so that your work is neither too hard nor too easy. We have also asked them to tell you more often how you might improve your work, when they mark it. The last thing we have asked the school to do is include more detail in their planning for the future.

I hope that you will go on enjoying your time in St. Peter's after the summer and that you will always do your best work.

Yours sincerely,

Christopher Gray
Lead inspector