

St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100839
Local Authority	Southwark
Inspection number	330265
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Robin Hammerton HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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 aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	230
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	25
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cannon Giles Goddard
Headteacher	Mrs Helen Dacey
Date of previous school inspection	11 July 2007
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Liverpool Grove Walworth London SE17 2HH

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2008
Inspection number	330265

Telephone number
Fax number

020 7703 4881
020 7703 1601

Age group	3-11
Inspection dates	9-10 December 2008
Inspection number	330265

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

Description of the school

This is an average sized church primary school. It has significant provision within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) through its Nursery and Reception classes. The school's population is rich in its ethnic diversity with the two largest groups being White British and Black African. Half of pupils speak English as an additional language, though few are at a very early stage of learning English. The school assesses fewer pupils than average as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD). At its last inspection, the school was deemed to require special measures. The headteacher is due to retire imminently and a new appointment has been made.

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, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. It is gradually improving and has used the support provided to it in special measures to build its own capacity, so that it is now standing on its own two feet and providing a satisfactory education. Parents spoken to by inspectors said their children are happy in school and that the staff are approachable and welcoming to parents and carers.

In 2008, there was a notable rise in the proportion of Year 6 pupils achieving the expected level in English, mathematics and science in national tests, with most pupils reaching this standard. In part, this improvement was due to booster activities provided for many of these pupils. Pupils are cared for well as individuals, leading to their good personal development. The school council contributes much, and is particularly effective in promoting good behaviour. The pupils' spiritual development is very strong and a reflective, respectful atmosphere is often in evidence, especially during worship times. This is a very cohesive and supportive community, which helps pupils to understand their place in the world and how to relate well to others.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong and pupils are confident to work collaboratively and discuss their learning. Pupils are provided with satisfactory guidance in lessons and through marking about how they can improve their work. Their progress over time in writing, reading and mathematics is generally assessed accurately. However, in too many lessons, the work set is not well enough matched to the assessed needs of pupils, which hinders their progress. This has not been picked up clearly as a weakness in the school's own monitoring of teaching and learning. Self-evaluation is satisfactory in that the school assesses its overall effectiveness and development accurately. However, as in the above example, weaker areas are not all sharply enough analysed which impedes further improvements in those aspects.

The curriculum is satisfactory, with a real strength in learning outside the classroom, including school visits, which notably enhance learning. It is under review, which is appropriate, as long term planning is not clear enough about how skills and knowledge are developed progressively across the year groups.

Staff accepted the tough message of the special measures designation and recognised the need for improvement. As a result, they are fully involved in evaluating and improving aspects of the school's provision on a day-to-day basis, within their own classes, phases or subject areas. The school development plan contains clear, broad improvement targets, which help focus the school's activity towards raising standards. However, there is a lack of coherence in the way the different strands are being addressed and in the management systems which support them. In short, staff and governors are working successfully as individuals and groups to bring steady and sustainable improvement, but the whole is not greater than the sum of its parts.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

When they enter the Nursery, children have a level of skills below that expected for their age. By the time they leave the Reception class, standards are still below expectations and their overall progress is satisfactory. However, children are increasingly making better progress from their individual starting points. This is because of the improvements the school is making.

Activities are appropriately set up indoors and outside to cover all the areas of learning and they entice the children to explore them. Nursery children, for example, could not wait to try out the snow tray, learning how to share and co-operate with others as they did so. There is a necessary and improving focus on developing children's literacy skills. Classrooms are labelled with helpful vocabulary and there are opportunities for children to have a go at writing for different purposes, such as shopping lists or party invitations. Adults build children's speaking and listening skills soundly, though there are sometimes limited opportunities for interaction when children are not directly working with them.

Children make good progress in their personal and social skills because the school pays close attention to their welfare and well-being. Relationships with parents are close and trusting. They exchange information with staff as needed on a daily basis and are involved with their children's targets. Staff carry out assessments systematically, using this information suitably to plan future activities. However, in the Reception class, the school has not implemented the requirement to allocate a key person to each child to oversee their development. The EYFS is well led by the phase leader and teamwork is strong.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that, in lessons, work is well matched to the assessed needs of all pupils, so that they are better challenged and make faster progress.
- Ensure that the hard work and endeavour of staff is more coherently managed to make school improvement faster.
- Ensure the whole-school curriculum planning and delivery helps raise standards by identifying and assuring a clearer progression of skills and knowledge over time.
- Provide a key worker for each pupil in Reception.

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

The school has worked hard to improve achievement and raise standards since the last inspection, and this is showing some impact. Pupils' achievement is better and is now satisfactory. All groups make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Results in the tests at the end of Year 6 in 2008 showed a considerable improvement overall in English, mathematics and science, with most pupils attaining the expected levels. However, fewer pupils reached the higher levels in English and mathematics than pupils did nationally. At Key Stage 1, there was less improvement and standards remained below average. The targets set were appropriate and helped to raise expectations, though not all were met.

School data shows that almost all current Year 6 pupils have made satisfactory progress in English and mathematics since they were in Year 2. It also indicates that most pupils across the school are on track to meet their targets at the end of this year, although, in Year 1 and Year 3, this is less evident. Pupils with learning difficulties and those learning English as an additional language are effectively supported and make progress similar to their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are confident and courteous as well as keen to learn and succeed. They get on well with each other and with adults. They enjoy being at school. Attendance is satisfactory and improving. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. During a whole school assembly, where the EYFS children enacted the story of 'The Three Little Pigs', older pupils showed their pleasure at the efforts of their youngest peers with spontaneous applause. The whole school joined in with great feeling as meaningful prayers were said. This is typical. Pupils can explain what is right and wrong, and so bullying is minimal and racial incidents are extremely rare. Pupils' behaviour is good, both during break periods and in lessons. However, during breaks, some lively play in the playground's restricted space is not always managed effectively, which leads to some pupils feeling less safe. Pupils have adopted healthy life styles. Most walk to school each day and appreciate the wholesome lunches provided. Physical education lessons, including swimming and a variety of sports, are popular, as is the wide range of sports clubs available. School councillors carry out their responsibilities with pride and authority, for example assisting in the appointment of staff and managing the behaviour of other children. Other pupils take on the roles of buddies, effectively looking out for pupils who might be lonely or upset. In the wider community, substantial sums are raised for charities and the school choir sings at several venues each year. Pupils' key skills in areas such as information and communication technology (ICT), literacy and numeracy are sound by the time they are in Year 6, preparing them satisfactorily for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers' subject knowledge is generally secure and learning objectives are mostly clear and shared with pupils. Teaching assistants also provide purposeful support for pupils with learning difficulties, or for those in the early stages of language acquisition. Relationships between pupils and teachers are positive with mutual respect and good humour.

In the best lessons, activities are engaging and teachers plan work that challenges pupils of all abilities. In these lessons, pupils apply themselves for extended periods of time and demonstrate the ability to work independently and collaboratively. In one religious education lesson, pupils made good progress because of the teacher's careful planning and effective questioning. This enabled pupils to extend their understanding of 'responsibility', reflect maturely on the Christmas story and respond to complex social issues with sensitivity and insight.

However, in too many lessons, pupils make only satisfactory, and occasionally inadequate, progress because tasks are not matched well to their needs and the pace of learning is slow. Introductions to some lessons are over long, which leaves less time for pupils to work independently and can lead to a loss of concentration. Higher attaining pupils are sometimes given more challenging tasks, although this practice is inconsistent. Whilst many pupils know their targets and what they have to do to improve, these are not always updated as regularly as they should be.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is suitably broad and interests pupils. Monitoring by senior leaders shows that teachers' planning is generally secure in EYFS and Key Stage 1 and improving in Key Stage 2. However, at the long-term whole-school level, there is insufficient clarity about progression in the development of skills and subject knowledge across the different year groups. This is especially true in subjects outside the core of English, mathematics and science. The school is currently revising the curriculum to include a more thematic approach. Recent work linked to the National Gallery's 'Take One Picture' project has been successful in promoting the development of these cross-curricular links for all year groups.

Teachers make good use of the local environment and visits. As a result, pupils see more clearly the relevance of their learning, and this assists their progress. A visit to the River Thames provided pupils with a very hands-on experience of local geography, whilst participation in a project about Charlie Chaplin enabled pupils to develop better historical understanding of the area in which they live. Visits to London Zoo and the Young Vic Theatre enabled pupils to improve the quality of their discursive and creative writing.

The school provides a sound, popular range of extra-curricular activities. Booster sessions have improved the progress made by pupils. Provision is being strengthened in mathematics, through new links with a local academy. The school choir has performed in a number of local venues, including Borough Market, raising money for charity.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school's caring ethos shows in the manner in which healthy living and regular attendance are carefully promoted, and child protection and safeguarding procedures are rigorously followed. When, for example, a pupil was intent on rejecting a nutritious school lunch, the deputy headteacher, with patience and care, persuaded her that it was worth eating. The headteacher speaks to parents of pupils whose attendance falls below an acceptable level and external agencies are used to good effect when persistent absence is identified. Health and safety procedures are appropriate although the supervision of boisterous play is not always sufficiently rigorous. The involvement of school council members in holding any misbehaving pupils to account is very effective. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils' work in reading, writing and numeracy is regularly monitored and tracked. A good range of data is available which enables staff to know which groups are performing well and which are not, over time. However, this information is not used consistently in lessons to ensure work is matched to pupils' needs, although good intervention support is provided for pupils who need extra help. Recently, a start has been made on tracking pupils' progress in science. Pupils' progress in information communications technology is not closely enough monitored, which is unfortunate in view of the school's recent heavy investment in computer hardware.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Whilst disappointed by it, the school accepted the judgement of special measures and the need to improve. As a consequence, over the last year and a half, some new management systems

have been put in place and others, already in existence, further developed. Administrative support staff, including the business manager, are very effective in their work. These points have helped bring about satisfactory improvement over time, enabling the school to be less dependent on external support and become appropriately self-reliant. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

However, these improving systems are not held together in a fully coherent or strategic way. For example, the school's self-evaluation is honest but not always penetrating enough. All staff now see the need to appraise the impact of their work but much of this useful endeavour does not feed closely into the overall school self-evaluation. Although there is a full programme of lesson observations, leading to feedback and discussion with and amongst staff, the school has not identified what the key strengths and weaknesses of teaching are. This makes whole-school improvement of teaching and learning harder to achieve. In turn, the school development plan, whilst making overall objectives clear and being very well focused on raising outcomes, says too little about what strategies and actions are needed to bring the necessary improvements. This is partly because the weaknesses in provision across the school are not precisely enough identified. Middle leaders are empowered and encouraged to develop their areas of responsibility and have produced effective individual action plans. These are helpful in bringing change but not well enough linked together or to the whole school improvement agenda.

The headteacher and her deputy, have a constructive working relationship. The deputy is suitably prepared to become acting head next term. Governors organised a good process for appointing a permanent headteacher, which has concluded, and a suitable induction programme for the appointee is organised. Governors make a good contribution to the life of the school. They are well organised and committed. Their weekly improvement committee meetings ask detailed and searching questions, in an encouraging way, of senior staff. These focus very effectively on the pupils' experience in school, and the outcomes achieved. Through this, senior leaders are both supported and held accountable. The clear targets in the school development plan help this process. However, governors are not much involved in first-hand monitoring of the plan, and have no formal role in it, which restricts somewhat their contribution to improvement.

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
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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	3

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	3

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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	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**

05 January 2009

Dear Pupils

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

When I came to the school with some other inspectors recently, it was the third time I had come. This is because I have been monitoring and supporting the school while it has been in special measures. I have enjoyed getting to know you and the school. Every time I have come I have been really impressed with your behaviour, respect, helpfulness and the way you care for each other. This most recent visit, however, may be the last time I will come and that is for a very happy reason. We decided the school is ready to come out of special measures. That is great news and you have all played your part - well done!

The school now provides you with a satisfactory education. The progress you all make, and test scores, have gone up and your teachers have been working really hard to make all the lessons even better for you. You are doing some great things in school. We loved seeing your work about 'The Fighting Temeraire' by Turner and the nativity play was fantastic, reminding us all of the wondrous Christmas story.

There is still much that can be done to make the school even better. So, we have made four main recommendations. These are to:

- make sure the work you get in class is just right for each one of you
- focus and manage all the hard work of the staff better, so it helps the school improve more quickly
- build up a better curriculum, so that your time in school is even more exciting and that as you move up the school, you can build up your knowledge and understanding better
- provide a special key worker for each pupil in Reception, like there already is in Nursery.

You can help by giving your ideas to staff and your school council. Do keep working hard and enjoying your time in school.

With best wishes for a successful future.

Yours faithfully

Robin Hammerton

Her Majesty's Inspector