

Leigh St Peter's CofE Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106479
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	336678
Inspection dates	19–20 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Mr Jim Kidd

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary Aided School
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs E Marshall
Headteacher	Mrs P Jolley
Date of previous school inspection	October 2006
School address	Leigh Street Leigh WN7 4TP
Telephone number	01942 671442
Fax number	01942 677141
Email address	enquiries@admin.saintpetersjuniors.wigan.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St. Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 0845 404045
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and representatives of the local authority. They observed the school's work and looked at teachers' planning, school attainment and pupils' progress monitoring data, and examples of reports to parents. In addition, inspectors analysed 50 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 23 returned by staff and 131 returned by pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the rate of progress made by pupils in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science
- the impact of the school's strategies to raise attainment in mathematics
- the quality of teachers' questioning during lessons
- the impact of the school's work to raise the confidence and self-esteem of its pupils
- the extent and accuracy of school self-evaluation at all levels to inform improvement planning.

Information about the school

This average sized school serves an estate of predominantly rented housing. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and there are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is twice the national average as is the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. There is a well above average number of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. St Peter's is an accredited Healthy School, was named Channel M Choir of the Year in 2009 and is a recent winner of both the local championship and challenge cup for rugby league.

The school is due to close at the end of the academic year and will amalgamate with the neighbouring infant school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good and improving school, which has excellent links with parents and carers and which provides outstanding care, guidance and support for its pupils. As a result, pupils respond positively to what the school offers them and their behaviour is of the highest order, both in lessons and around the school.

Pupils enjoy learning and they make good progress overall across the school, to reach broadly average standards by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. Although improving, their progress in mathematics is not as good as it is in English and science. Indeed, pupils' attainment in writing is generally above that usually found, partly as a result of the exemplary marking of their written work, which shows them immediately where they have gone wrong and which motivates them to aim for even higher standards.

Pupils have a well-developed social conscience and take real pride in looking after each other and in raising money for a range of charities. 'Guardian Angels' and 'Buddies' help their younger counterparts and the school council has a good reputation among its constituents. Pupils have a keen awareness of why a balanced diet and regular exercise are vital to their lives and sport is an important area of school life. They are also justly proud of their nationally-recognised choir and their singing is a joy to hear.

Teaching and assessment are good and pupils have the highest regard for the adults who work with them. They enjoy their lessons because, in their words, 'Learning is fun and our teachers and teaching assistants are always there to help us if we get stuck.' The 'Sparkle' initiative, which has been running for three years, is particularly popular among pupils because it gives them opportunities to link their learning between different subjects and because they are encouraged to express their own opinions about how well they are doing.

Since the previous inspection, the school has made significant improvements in pupils' achievement, in their behaviour, in the teaching they receive and also in the care, guidance and support provided for them. This demonstrates the impressive commitment of senior leaders and of other staff and their willingness to use their initiative for the benefit of the pupils in their charge. The comprehensive monitoring of pupils' progress is just one example of the rigorous self-evaluation throughout the school. Middle leaders and governors play an important part here too and the school

is well aware of its strengths and areas for development. There is no complacency in St Peter's and the school therefore has good capacity to improve further and it provides good value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics by:
 - ensuring they have more opportunities to be independent in their learning and to find things out for themselves
 - giving them more opportunities to develop their skills in numeracy in all subjects of the curriculum
 - ensuring their learning in mathematics lessons is linked to real-life situations
 - continuing with the one-to-one support delivered by the maths champion
 - extending the exemplary practice in literacy marking to the marking of pupils' work in mathematics.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' behaviour in lessons is outstanding and they are eager to learn. They are delighted too, when their classmates succeed. They enjoy working in pairs and in groups to support each other and to act as a resource for their classmates' learning.

From below average standards when they enter Year 3, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress and achieve well across the school. Standards have risen markedly since the previous inspection and are now broadly average by the end of Year 6. Pupils' skills in literacy, particularly in writing, are improving apace. The school recognises that pupils' progress and attainment in mathematics, although improving, continue to lag behind those in English and science. One-to-one support and discussions with the teacher maths champion have therefore been introduced to highlight the difficulties some pupils have. Pupils find these sessions valuable and look forward to these meetings when they can not only share their concerns but also celebrate the new mathematical skills they are acquiring.

Pupils display impressive levels of confidence and self-esteem because, in their words, 'We get praised for the good things we do and we feel part of one big educational family.' Indeed, pupils feel safe, value the support they receive from the 'Guardian Angels' and 'Buddies' and are always willing to offer their opinions to members of the school council. They take responsibility readily and display a genuine affection for their peers and for the adults who work with them. They are immensely proud of their school and represent it well outside its walls. Their work for a variety of charities is highly valued and the choir enjoys an enviable reputation in the local community and further afield. Indeed, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and pupils are learning more about religions and cultures that are different to their own, partly as a result of the link with the school in Malawi. Their keen awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, their care and support

for each other and their good academic achievement prepare them well for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection and teachers value the 'Sixteen Strategies', advice which was introduced by senior leaders after a round of internal lesson observations last year. Assessment, too, is now good and there is exemplary practice in the marking of pupils' writing, where the pink and blue system gives pupils immediate feedback on their strengths and motivates them to eradicate their weaknesses. This system has such a positive impact that it is surprising the school has not adapted it for the marking of pupils' work in mathematics.

Teaching is characterised by very good relationships in the classroom, realistic levels of challenge for pupils of all levels of ability and excellent support from teaching assistants. Pupils demonstrate a real enthusiasm for learning and are generally fully engaged in the activities. In an outstanding Year 4 literacy lesson, for example, pupils were beside themselves with delight when they received their exercise books and comments such as, 'Great! I haven't been pinked!' resounded across the classroom. They knew exactly what they needed to do to improve their work and set to with a will. In a minority of lessons, however, and sometimes in mathematics, there is too much teacher direction at the beginning and pupils do not move on fast enough to independent learning.

Pupils love 'Sparkle' and speak with confidence about the latest project, which has design and technology at its heart. Parents and carers, too, comment about the wide range of interesting activities which are open to their children and believe that the curriculum, 'educates the whole child.' Pupils are fully aware of ecological issues and the recent health week has reinforced their understanding of issues in relation to both their physical and emotional well-being. The 'Child Line' assembly was a delight to attend and pupils asked perceptive questions of their visitors, once again demonstrating how self-confident they have become. There is a good variety of extra-curricular events, including trips and visits, but there are insufficient

opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics. The school is also looking to reinforce pupils' learning by linking the mathematics curriculum to more real-life situations.

Pastoral care is outstanding and recognised as such by both pupils and parents and carers. There is also excellent support for families and the talented and committed learning mentor plays a pivotal role here. The support and guidance from both teachers and teaching assistants are first class and pupils identified as vulnerable, and those who often find the work difficult, benefit from high levels of care. Pupils, too, are more than willing to help their classmates when difficulties occur. As pupils themselves say, 'We know each other, help each other and treat each other like we should.'

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets [pupils']/[children's] needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, ably supported by her senior leadership team, fosters high levels of teamwork amongst the staff and continues to be instrumental in providing high expectations of all and in driving continuous improvement. Staff of all levels of experience speak with one voice about their school: 'We are a team, are proud of our school and it is a privilege to work alongside such dedicated and enthusiastic professionals.'

Governors provide good support for the school and are well informed about its strengths and areas for development. They value the regular presentations by staff about their work and they hold the leadership to account with rigour. They, too, are proud of the effective ways in which the school promotes equality of opportunity for all and of how well it supports pupils who are identified as vulnerable.

Safeguarding procedures are good and are exemplary in some respects. There is strong adult presence in the school yard at break and lunchtime and teachers and teaching assistants are present to greet their charges in the morning and to say 'goodbye' at the end of school. A strong feature of the care shown to pupils is the school's outstanding engagement with parents and carers.

The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory and improving. It has links with two other schools within the local authority and is actively seeking further links with schools with a more diverse population.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and of what it tries to do for their sons and daughters. They value also the support it gives to families and make special mention of the advice they receive, often via the school's web page, about how they can support their offsprings' learning at home. They are grateful too for the opportunities the school provides for parents and carers to gain extra qualifications. As they say, 'Our children thrive on a happy balance of academic and extra-curricular activities and we as parents benefit from the adult mathematics classes which help us to assist with homework.' Although a very small minority of parents mentioned some concern about behaviour, inspectors found behaviour was of a high order.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Leigh St Peter's CofE Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received **50** completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 209 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	56	22	44	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	31	62	18	36	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	26	52	22	44	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	54	19	38	4	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	60	19	38	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	56	22	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	50	25	50	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	20	40	29	58	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	42	29	58	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	46	22	44	3	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	40	28	57	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	52	21	42	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	60	19	38	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>the following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.



21 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Leigh St Peter's CofE Junior School, Leigh WN7 4TP

Thank you so much for the marvellous welcome you gave the team members when we came to inspect your school recently. We are particularly grateful to those of you, including members of the school council, who came to talk to us at lunchtime. We really enjoyed your singing in assembly and you asked some really interesting questions to the representatives of *Child Line* who came to speak to you – well done! We know you wanted to find out how the inspection was going so I thought I would write to you to let you know.

St Peter's is a good school and we know that you are very proud of it. You make good progress in lessons because you work hard, your teachers teach you well and you get very good support from your teaching assistants. Your behaviour is excellent and older pupils like the 'Guardian Angels' and 'Buddies' make sure that everyone is happy and that no-one is lonely at breaks and lunchtimes. The school council also does its best to put your ideas forward to the teachers. You gave the inspection team some wonderful advice about how to eat healthily and about how to stay fit and we know that you enjoy the many sports activities open to you. You told us that 'Sparkle' helps you to learn because you have so much fun doing it and you can link your work together in so many different subjects.

Your headteacher and all the other staff take excellent care of you and are very proud of you too! They are always looking for ways to make St Peter's an even better school. We would like to help them to do this too and so we have asked them to give you more opportunities to find things out for yourselves in your mathematics lessons, so that your skills in numeracy get better and better and match your work in literacy. You can help them too by continuing to do your best in every lesson!

Thanks again for being so kind and so polite to us. We really enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn.

Best wishes to you all.

Jim Kidd
Lead inspector

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