

St Peter's Catholic Voluntary Academy

St Catherine's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH6 4AH

Inspection dates

13–14 September 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders and governors focus firmly on maintaining the school's strengths identified at the previous inspection and have successfully built upon them further.
- Middle leaders welcome their increased accountability for pupils' progress. Like the rest of the staff, they are committed to further improvement.
- Pupils attain highly. By the end of key stage 4, attainment in English, mathematics and in many other subjects is above average, and has been for several years.
- Children in Reception have an excellent start to their education, making outstanding progress. Pupils from key stage 1 to the age of 16 make good progress, and some achieve outstandingly well.
- Students in the sixth form make good progress.
- Although there are some gaps between the rate of progress of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, compared to other pupils, these gaps have narrowed.
- Teaching has continued to improve in quality. Staff value the good opportunities the school gives them to develop their skills further.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. So is the quality of care, guidance and support, helping pupils become responsible young citizens.
- The school successfully fosters high-quality spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Performing arts, art and sport are among the several strengths in the curriculum. The school's strong Catholic ethos underpins the successful curriculum.
- Senior leaders and governors understand the school's strengths and areas for continued improvement very well. They evaluate the school's performance accurately and are successfully adapting to recent changes in the curriculum and assessment. Leaders put great emphasis on the quality of both teaching and pupils' academic and personal development.
- Parents greatly appreciate what the school does for their children.
- In several year groups and subjects, middle-attaining pupils make the most rapid progress. Lower-attaining pupils, and the most able pupils and students in the sixth form, make good progress, but not to the same rapid extent. Teachers do not consistently challenge them to do their best.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportions of pupils and sixth-form students who make outstanding progress and achieve as well as they can by making sure that:
 - staff consistently give them the opportunity to work at a level which will help them to reach their full academic potential.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has provided strong and visionary leadership since joining the school just before the previous inspection. Together with his large senior leadership team, he has successfully managed change and ensured improvement in key areas such as teaching and pupils' achievement. At the same time, he has managed other major developments. Notable among these has been the transformation of St Peter's into an all-through 4 to 19 academy.
- Almost all parents are very positive about all aspects of the school. They made comments to inspectors such as, 'This is an amazing school with amazing teachers,' and 'The new headteacher has made a huge difference.'
- Middle leaders play an important role in driving improvements. They are now more accountable for progress and relish their role both in checking the quality of teaching and learning and supporting teachers in developing their skills.
- Senior leaders check the quality of teaching and learning carefully. Leaders reward successful teaching appropriately and provide support to staff, including teaching assistants, where required.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding increasingly effectively. For example, additional spending on resources and staffing has helped disadvantaged pupils increase their rates of progress. Similarly, funding set aside for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has been used to improve their progress, especially in English, and to support their well-being.
- Teaching has improved. Teachers now work together more closely and are coming to terms with recent developments, for example in the curriculum and methods of assessment. Parents and pupils are positive about teaching, and pupils make good progress overall, although teachers do not consistently match work precisely to the needs of all pupils in lessons.
- Leaders have successfully incorporated the primary phase into the school, although it operates on a separate site. In particular, there is outstanding provision for early years children in the Reception Year.
- School leaders and governors ensure an extensive network of care and support for all pupils. Parents and pupils themselves are very aware that this is a strength of the school. Pupils value the Nurture centre, established relatively recently. Support staff have worked successfully to reduce the gap in attendance between disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils on the one hand and the rest of the school's pupils on the other.
- The school's curriculum is very successful in helping pupils achieve well in core subjects such as English and mathematics. Pupils also study a range of other subjects. They particularly enjoy art, music and sport. A good range of clubs and visits, for example to London and Paris, widens pupils' experiences. Pupils also have opportunities to take on roles of responsibility.
- All staff are firmly committed to maintaining an ethos of equal opportunity. School leaders ensure extensive spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are

close links with the church, and staff encourage pupils to reflect on moral and social issues. This often leads to discussions around issues relating to British values and life in modern British society, such as the implications and responsibilities of democracy in its various contexts.

Governance of the school

- Governance is strong and effective. It is more effective than at the previous inspection, as shown in the way governors met challenges such as developing the primary and early years phases of the school.
- Governors understand the school's strengths and areas for development. As well as supporting the leaders, they provide constructive challenge. For example, they have followed up the impact of spending funds designated for the support of disadvantaged pupils and for sport in the primary phase.
- Governors are very active in the school. They meet parents, staff and pupils regularly, and take part in monitoring exercises. Consequently, they play a key role, along with the leadership team, in planning the school's key priorities for improvement. They also check how effectively the school implements these plans.
- Governors are very aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and get appropriate training.
- As a result of their expertise and their commitment, governors are well placed to help the school move further forward. Because there is already a successful track record of improvement, the combined drive and vision of senior staff and governors demonstrate that the school has a strong capacity to improve still further.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and governors stay vigilant and ensure that pupils' safety and welfare are a key part of the school's provision.
- The policies and secure procedures to ensure child protection have a high profile. Everyone sees safeguarding as their responsibility. As a result, parents and pupils are confident that the school provides a secure environment.
- Staff understand their responsibilities. All staff receive training in safeguarding and child protection. They know their responsibility to follow up any possible concerns, and whom they should involve. Staff receive both in-school training and training from outside on issues such as 'Prevent', and recognising and combating extremism and radicalisation. Governors also receive training.
- The strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school is exemplified in the way the education social worker liaises closely with other staff as well as outside agencies. Together, they closely monitor the welfare and progress of individuals such as a small number of children looked after.
- The school emphasises the importance of e-safety and gives appropriate advice on this to both pupils and parents.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- School leaders at all levels have successfully focused on improving the consistency of teaching, mainly by effective monitoring and providing good opportunities for teachers and support staff to improve their skills.
- Teachers increasingly use the assessment information gathered about pupils' attainment and progress effectively to plan activities which enable pupils to make often impressive gains in skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers' good subject knowledge and a range of skills reinforce this. As a result, middle-attaining pupils do particularly well.
- Teaching is particularly successful in early years, enabling children in Reception to make outstanding progress.
- Good training for teaching assistants has helped them to provide more effective help in lessons. Some pupils with particular learning needs also get helpful support outside of lessons to improve their progress.
- Pupils told inspectors how much they value the support and insights which their teachers provide. Parents also greatly appreciate what teachers do.
- Staff give pupils useful feedback on their work, helping them to improve it. This was particularly evident in some of the English work which inspectors saw.
- The school supports disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils outstandingly well. This helps these pupils make good progress and has reduced some of the previous gaps in achievement between these pupils and others.
- The teaching of the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, enables them to make good progress most of the time, although occasionally the degree of challenge is less than it could be.
- Teachers set homework regularly in line with the school's policy. Most pupils find this very helpful. A small number of parents who wrote to inspectors were not convinced that all homework significantly helped their children's learning.
- Reading and mathematical skills are successfully taught in early years and key stage 1.
- Teaching is not just effective in ensuring good progress in the core skills of English and mathematics. It also ensures that pupils do well in a range of other subjects, including those such as art and performing arts, for which the school has a high reputation.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good, so that the students make good progress. However, in the sixth form, as with pupils lower down the school, occasionally the level of challenge in activities does not enable all students to make the progress of which they are capable.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.

- Parents and pupils confirmed in talking to inspectors and in written responses that the school provides an outstanding level of support, care and welfare for pupils. A typical parental comment was, 'Children are looked after in a kind, caring and respectful environment.'
- Pupils feel very safe and proud of their school. Staff know the individual needs of all pupils well, including the needs of the most vulnerable such as children looked after. Consequently, these pupils have every opportunity to thrive well in their personal development as well as in their academic work.
- Pupils understand the implications of various types of bullying well. They do not regard bullying as a problem. When there is any untoward incident, pupils are confident about going to staff to resolve it quickly.
- Pupils of all ages have very positive attitudes towards their work and the other activities which the school provides, such as clubs and visits.
- Pupils get comprehensive careers guidance from an appropriate age. They also get good advice about issues relating to safeguarding, such as e-safety.
- The school has a very inclusive ethos. It makes sure that all pupils, including the disadvantaged and vulnerable, feel valued and have the same opportunities as others. Parents confirmed this to inspectors.
- Staff encourage pupils to show respect and responsibility towards others, both within school and elsewhere. The school reinforces this, for example through the link with a school in South Africa.
- Staff celebrate the school's specific Catholic ethos and also encourage the celebration of diversity.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Inspectors were very impressed not just by pupils' attitudes towards learning but also with their behaviour in lessons and around the site. Pupils are unfailingly polite and courteous.
- The great majority of parents confirm the excellent behaviour. Pupils told inspectors that teachers manage behaviour consistently most of the time, using the agreed procedures.
- Attendance is above average for most pupils. Staff have worked hard with the families of some lower attenders, especially those who are disadvantaged, to improve their attendance. This is having a positive impact, helped by initiatives such as the breakfast club.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The school has managed recent changes in the curriculum and methods of assessment skilfully, maintaining previous strengths in pupils' attainment and progress and building upon them further.

- Since the school began to educate young children, there have been very strong results in early years. Both boys and girls, of all abilities, have demonstrated levels of knowledge, understanding and skills well above national expectations in almost all areas of learning and personal development. Inspectors saw work which confirmed children's impressive attainment and progress in Reception.
- Pupils in Year 1 attain at a level above national expectations in the Year 1 phonics check. Many pupils in key stage 1 read accurately and fluently for their age.
- Since the previous inspection, pupils by the end of key stage 4 have made good progress overall, although there have been some variations between subjects. Although significant changes have recently taken place in GCSE assessment, attainment has consistently remained high and has even improved in English literature. Performance has been strong both in the compulsory core subjects and in the 'open' element which allows pupils a choice of subjects.
- The good progress which pupils make is very evident in the quality of their work, as well as in the school's assessment. Pupils take pride in their work, including its presentation. For example, inspectors saw mature work in English and some good writing up of practical investigations in science.
- All groups of pupils share in the good progress. Lower attainers and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do well. The latter group benefit from effective use of catch-up funding to ensure good achievement in English and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils, including the able disadvantaged, do equally well. Middle attainers often make the most marked progress of all.
- Although the most able pupils make good progress, they do not consistently achieve to their full potential in lessons. This is mainly because teachers do not consistently offer them the challenge which would allow them to reach their full potential and attain the highest standards.
- There are sizeable minorities of pupils in the school who are not from a White British background or whose first language is not English. In both cases, these pupils have consistently achieved at least as well as other pupils in the school, and sometimes at a faster rate. This is still the case.
- Students in the sixth form make good progress, although as with pupils lower down the school, the most able do not consistently make as much progress as they should.
- A high proportion of pupils in Year 11 go into further education, employment or training.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The school has only provided for early years during the last three years. Children in the current Reception Year were being inducted into their classes at the very moment that the inspectors themselves were in the school. Therefore, there was no opportunity to see these children in the usual classroom environment.
- Nevertheless, inspectors saw considerable evidence which led them to judge early years provision as outstanding. They saw the early years assessment results for the previous two years. Inspectors saw the work done by the children last year. They were

also able to talk to staff, see a range of evidence provided by the school's leaders, talk with parents and read comments which parents provided.

- All the evidence, taken together, showed that early years provision is outstanding. Pupils in Year 1 who had been through Reception very recently are already attaining well above national expectations for their age group. Early years assessment for the previous two years shows that children, both boys and girls, of all abilities reach the end of Reception with levels of knowledge, understanding and personal development well above expectations. Children in Reception are already very competent in all areas which are assessed, including core skills such as language, communications and number.
- This evidence is reinforced by the work done by previous Reception classes, which inspectors were able to see. This provided evidence, for example, of early writing skills well above expectations.
- There is outstanding leadership of early years. The primary phase leader organises Reception and manages staff very successfully. Children in Reception have access to a bright, stimulating working environment, both inside the school and outside, including access to the Forest School.
- The school assesses children both when joining the school and at various times during their time in Reception. This assessment confirms the outstanding progress.
- Several parents wrote comments for the inspection team about their children's experience. The comments were all very positive in praising the quality of teaching and learning which their children received. Children do well both academically and in terms of quickly learning how to settle in to school life. They learn to get on well with other children and the conventions of how to behave and get the best out of their time in the school. Children are strongly supported and staff know the children very well.
- Good communications between home and the school help staff prepare children well for their first experience of the school and also for their transition at the end of Reception into Year 1.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- At the time of the inspection, changes in staffing meant that the head of sixth form was only very recently in post. However, over time there has been effective leadership of the sixth form. The school's leadership team as a whole is well aware of the sixth form's strengths and areas for development.
- As lower down the school, leaders have worked successfully to improve teaching in the sixth form, for example by providing training opportunities for staff.
- Over 99% of students achieve a pass in their A levels. Over 95% of students who apply to university get to the institution of their choice.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good and is characterised by teachers' strong subject knowledge.
- Students' progress on sixth-form courses has been good overall in AS and A level courses. This is evident in students' work. As lower down the school, progress is not outstanding, mainly because not all students who join the sixth form with high levels of

attainment get as many of the highest A level grades as they should. Students who follow the smaller number of applied courses often achieve at a higher rate, making exceptional progress.

- Retention from Year 12 into Year 13 is good. Students enjoy their academic courses but also appreciate the range of activities which enrich the curriculum.
- Like pupils lower down the school, sixth formers appreciate the strength of support, welfare and advice which staff give them, including careers advice and advice on university choices.
- Safeguarding in the sixth form is strong. Sixth formers feel valued. They enjoy responsibility and their links with pupils lower down the school.
- Students follow a programme of personal and social education to further their understanding of the wider world, building on work done lower down the school. Much of this work takes place in form tutor periods. Leaders recognise that a more structured, coordinated approach to this aspect of students' education is an area for development.

School details

Unique reference number	137349
Local authority	Bournemouth
Inspection number	10037065

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,689
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	341
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Richard Dickinson
Headteacher	David Todd
Telephone number	01202 421141
Website	www.st-peters.bournemouth.sch.uk
Email address	info@st-peters.bournemouth.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- St Peter's is larger than the average-sized similar school. It operates on two sites. Early years and primary operate on the Iford site. Other pupils and the sixth form are educated on the main Southbourne site, over two miles away.

- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are from a minority ethnic group or who speak English as an additional language is just above average.
- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of key stage 4.
- The school began accepting primary-aged pupils on a phased basis from September 2014.
- The school operates a breakfast club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed several lessons in each phase of the school. They carried out several of the observations jointly with members of the school’s senior leadership team. Inspectors also visited some lessons for shorter periods.
- An inspector attended an assembly. Inspectors had discussions with senior and middle leaders, and with other teachers and support staff. Two inspectors had a discussion with four governors.
- Inspectors looked at the books of pupils and sixth-form students in a range of subjects.
- Inspectors had discussions with groups of pupils and sixth-form students, and talked with other pupils informally. Inspectors heard several younger pupils reading.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour in and around the school.
- The inspection team looked at a range of documentation, including the school’s evaluation of its own performance, minutes of governing body meetings, assessment information relating to the progress of current pupils, information relating to safeguarding and various other documents.
- Inspectors considered 148 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View. They also considered a substantial number of free-text responses which parents sent in to Ofsted.

Inspection team

John Laver, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Steward	Ofsted Inspector
Marion Borland	Ofsted Inspector
Marcia Headon	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Colledge	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Jane	Ofsted Inspector

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