

**St Peter's Primary School
Renfrewshire**

9 December 2003

Contents	Page
1. Background	1
2. Key strengths	1
3. Views of parents and carers, pupils and staff	1
4. How good are learning, teaching and achievement?	2
5. How well are pupils supported?	3
6. How good is the environment for learning?	4
7. Improving the school	4
Appendix 1 Indicators of quality	6
Appendix 2 Summary of questionnaire responses	7
How can you contact us?	8

1. Background

St Peter's Primary School was inspected in September 2003 as part of a national sample of primary education. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school at all stages. It evaluated pupils' achievements, the effectiveness of the school and the environment for learning. There was particular focus on attainment in English language and mathematics.

HM Inspectors examined pupils' work and interviewed staff and pupils. They assessed the school's processes for self-evaluation.

St Peter's Primary School is a denominational primary school which serves the Glenburn and surrounding areas of Paisley. At the time of the inspection the roll was 247. Around 27 percent of pupils were entitled to free school meals which was above the national average. Pupils' attendance was around the national average.

An integrated inspection of pre-school provision was carried out at the same time by HMIE and the Care Commission and is the subject of a separate report.

2. Key strengths

HM Inspectors identified the following key strengths.

- The quality of learning and teaching at P7.
- The improvement of pupils' attainment in writing.
- The very attractive school library which was used extensively by the pupils and was very effectively run by parents.
- The welcoming atmosphere and the very good relationships between all staff and pupils.
- The very effective partnership with parents.
- The leadership of the headteacher and the effectiveness of the senior management team.

3. Views of parents and carers, pupils and staff

Members of the inspection team analysed responses to questionnaires issued to all parents and staff and to a sample of pupils. They also met the vice-chair of the School Board, a group of parents and the parish priest and interviewed pupils and staff.

Overall, the team found that parents and carers, pupils and staff were very pleased with the work of the school. Around a third of parents and carers who were issued with a questionnaire responded. They thought that the school was well led and had a good reputation in the local community. Pupils enjoyed being at school and thought that the school helped keep them safe and healthy. They felt that teachers helped them when they got stuck and teachers explained things clearly to them. All staff enjoyed working at the school and thought it was well led. Further information about responses to the questionnaires appears in Appendix 2.

4. How good are learning, teaching and achievement?

Pupils' learning experiences and achievements

The overall quality of the curriculum was very good. It was broad and balanced and provided very effectively for pupils' personal and social development. Additional time had been allocated to the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils at P6 and P7 were taught French. The programme for expressive arts was being enhanced by the contributions of visiting specialists. These included a coach for athletics provided through the 'Health Improvement Through Sport' (HITS) project. At P1 to P3, pupils did not have enough opportunities to learn through play.

Overall, the quality of teaching was good. Teachers questioned pupils skilfully and provided clear explanations. There were examples of very effective teaching of writing and mathematics. Teachers were developing pupils' understanding of mathematics through encouraging them to explain their answers. Pupils at P7 made good use of computers to research topics and to prepare and present information at an assembly. At other stages, pupils did not yet make sufficient use of information and communications technology (ICT) to support their learning. Teachers planned homework well and made very good use of praise to build pupils' confidence.

The school had successfully established a very positive learning environment. Almost all pupils worked enthusiastically and were keen to participate in lessons. Pupils, especially at the upper stages, regularly took responsibility for, and were active in, their own learning. They co-operated well with each other when working on practical activities, such as experimenting in science and technology and taking part in physical education. All staff made very good contributions to the development of pupils' personal and social skills through consistently promoting good behaviour in and around the school. Pupils' achievements were regularly celebrated in class and at assemblies. Younger pupils spoke positively of the benefits of having a senior pupil as a 'buddy'. Senior pupils had a range of opportunities to take responsibility. They organised the school tuck shop and regularly raised funds for charity. All pupils were enthusiastic about using the library. Teachers and the parents, who organised the library, were successfully encouraging pupils to enjoy reading a wide range of books.

English language

The overall quality of pupils' attainment in English language was very good. Pupils' attainment in reading and writing had consistently improved. There had been a marked improvement in pupils'

attainment in writing. Almost all pupils had attained appropriate national levels in listening, talking and reading. Most had attained these levels in writing. Pupils responded enthusiastically in group discussions and almost all spoke with confidence and clarity. Class assemblies provided good opportunities for pupils to speak to a wider audience. Most pupils listened attentively to teachers' explanations and instructions. Pupils at all stages read regularly for pleasure and talked knowledgeably about different types of text. Teachers provided pupils with very good opportunities to write for a range of purposes. Pupils had produced a range of poems and imaginative stories. They were applying their writing skills in practical ways such as reports on their topics in environmental studies. Teachers were effectively developing pupils' skills in listening and talking within the programme for English language and in other aspects of the curriculum, such as religious and moral education. The school needed to review further their arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' progress in listening and talking.

Mathematics

The overall quality of pupils' attainment in mathematics was very good. There was an improving trend in attainment. Almost all pupils were achieving appropriate national levels of attainment in information handling, number, money and measurement and shape, position and movement. Most pupils at P2 and around half at P5 were achieving these levels early. Pupils were competent in written and mental calculation. They could identify a range of two- and three-dimensional shapes and confidently discuss their properties. At P7, pupils could use computers to organise and display information in a variety of forms. Teachers needed to provide pupils at other stages with opportunities to organise and display information using computers. At all stages pupils were learning to use a wide range of strategies in problem solving and enquiry. At P7, pupils could competently apply these strategies to problems in a real-life context.

5. How well are pupils supported?

A wide range of staff provided very good support for pupils. All staff placed a high priority on pupils' care and welfare and were very sensitive to meeting pupils' social and emotional needs. The school had adopted the education authority's comprehensive policy for the care and welfare of its pupils. All staff were clear about their responsibilities.

The deputy headteacher managed and participated in the very effective provision for supporting pupils experiencing difficulties with their learning. The area network support teacher was supporting some younger pupils with the aim of improving their social skills. Classroom assistants, with the support of physiotherapists, were working with small groups of pupils to improve their co-ordination and movement. The programme also aimed to improve pupils' self-confidence and promote more effective learning. The school and education authority had very good arrangements in place for the management of Records of Need. The deputy headteacher closely monitored the progress of pupils with individualised education programmes. The school had well-organised arrangements in place to support pupils transferring from the nursery and to secondary school. Overall, teachers chose tasks and activities very well to meet pupils' needs. However, in mathematics, teachers needed to review their approaches to the organisation of group activities to ensure that all pupils were sufficiently challenged.

6. How good is the environment for learning?

Aspect	Comment
Quality of accommodation and facilities	Classrooms were bright and attractive. The school was making very effective use of additional areas to work with small groups of pupils. There was an oratory which allowed parents to join classes for religious services. Parents, who had received funding from a range of local associations, had extensively refurbished the school library. It was very attractive and was making a significant contribution to the life of the school. Pupils had access to extensive outdoor playing areas. However, access for pupils with physical disabilities was limited and all pupils did not have ready access to fresh drinking water.
Climate and relationships, expectations and promoting achievement and equality	The welcoming atmosphere in the school was a major strength. Relationships between all staff and pupils were very good. Pupils were polite and proud of their school. All staff worked very well together. The senior management team promoted a strong sense of achievement across the school. Teachers had high expectations for pupils' attendance, behaviour and attainment. The school had been very successful in developing a sense of equality and fairness amongst pupils. Daily prayers and weekly assemblies provided very good opportunities for religious observance and celebrating pupils' achievements.
Partnership with parents and the community	The headteacher and staff had very successfully established very good partnership with parents and the School Board. The parent teacher association had raised substantial funds for the school, for example, for school trips, computers and books for the library. The school communicated regularly with parents through newsletters, reports on pupils' progress and a very informative handbook. The partnership of parents and staff in the organisation of the library was a model of good practice.

7. Improving the school?

The staff, parents and pupils of St Peter's Primary School had successfully created a very positive learning environment where the contributions of all were valued. Pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics had steadily improved. Attainment in writing had shown significant improvement and was continuing to improve. Teaching had a number of strengths and almost all pupils had developed very positive attitudes to learning. At the early stages, pupils were learning to work independently. Staff provided very good support to pupils experiencing difficulties with their learning and behaviour.

The headteacher was very committed to providing the highest quality education for all pupils. She had a clear vision for the school and provided very effective leadership. Staff and parents were very positive about the level of support she provided. The headteacher regularly monitored the quality of

pupils' homework and classwork. Teachers had started to use national indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of aspects of their work. They evaluated the effectiveness of their planning, but did not yet sufficiently focus on the quality of learning and teaching.

The senior management team worked very well together. There was a strong sense of teamwork amongst all staff. The depute headteacher and senior teacher had made significant contributions to the improvements in pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. They had led improvements to programmes in writing and environmental studies. Teachers appreciated the level of support they received from the senior management team.

The headteacher involved teachers fully in the planning process. Parents and pupils were regularly consulted. The previous plan had helped staff improve the programme for writing and environmental studies. The headteacher had successfully established a climate where school improvement was the shared responsibility of every member of staff.

The school and education authority should take action to ensure further improvement in the work of the school and to raise achievement for all its pupils. In doing so, they should take account of the need to:

- make more use of information and communications technology (ICT) to support pupils' learning; and
- develop further their approaches to monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

As a result of the high performance, the strong record of improvement and the very effective leadership of this school, HM Inspectors will make no further reports in connection with this inspection. The school and the education authority have been asked to prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the main findings of the report, and to share that plan with parents and carers. Within two years of the publication of this report the education authority, working with the school, will provide a progress report to parents and carers.

Maureen McKenna
HM Inspector

9 December 2003

Appendix 1 Indicators of quality

We judged the following to be *very good*

- Structure of the curriculum
- Pupils' learning experiences
- Pupils' attainment in English language
- Pupils' attainment in mathematics
- Meeting pupils' needs
- Pastoral care
- Climate and relationships
- Expectations and promoting attainment
- Equality and fairness
- Partnerships with parents, the School Board and the community
- Effectiveness and deployment of staff with additional responsibilities
- Leadership

We judged the following to be *good*

- The teaching process
- Accommodation and facilities
- Self-evaluation

We judged the following to be *fair*

- No aspects were found to be in this category

We judged the following to be *unsatisfactory*

- No aspects were found to be in this category

Appendix 2 Summary of questionnaire responses

Important features of responses from the various groups which received questionnaires is listed below. Where any group had five or less respondents then, in order to maintain confidentiality, the analysis is not provided.

<p>What pleased parents and carers most</p>	<p>What parents and carers would like to see improved</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school had a good reputation in the local community. • School reports gave them helpful information about their child's progress and parents' evenings were helpful and informative. • School buildings were kept in good order. • The school had explained how they could support their child with homework and had made it clear to them what standards were expected from pupils. 	<p>Parents had no significant concerns they wished to see developed.</p>
<p>What pleased pupils most</p>	<p>What pupils would like to see improved</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They enjoyed being at school. • Teachers helped them when they got stuck and expected them to work as hard as they could. • The behaviour of pupils was good. • They felt safe and well at school. 	<p>Pupils had no significant concerns they wished to see developed.</p>
<p>What pleased staff most</p>	<p>What staff would like to see improved</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was effective communication between senior managers and staff. • They had good opportunities to be involved in the decision-making process. • Standards set for pupils' behaviour were consistently upheld in the school. • Senior managers worked effectively as a team and the school was well led. 	<p>Staff had no significant concerns they wished to see developed.</p>

How can you contact us?

Copies of this report have been sent to the headteacher and school staff, the Director of Education and Leisure, local councillors and appropriate Members of the Scottish Parliament. Subject to availability, further copies may be obtained free of charge from HM Inspectorate of Education, Europa Building, 450 Argyle Street, Glasgow G2 8LG or by telephoning 0141 242 0100. Copies are also available on our website: www.hmie.gov.uk.

Should you wish to comment on or make a complaint about any aspect of the inspection or about this report, you should write in the first instance to Frank Crawford, HMCI at the above address. A copy of our complaints procedure is available from that office and on our website.

If you are still dissatisfied, you can contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman directly or through your member of the Scottish Parliament. The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government Departments and Agencies. She will not normally consider your complaint before the HMIE complaints procedure has been used. Instead, she will usually ask you to give us the chance to put matters right if we can.

Complaints to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman must be submitted within 12 months of the date of publication of this report.

The Ombudsman can be contacted at:

Professor Alice Brown
The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
23 Walker Street
Edinburgh
EH3 7HX

Telephone number: 0870 011 5378
e-mail: enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk

More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website:
www.scottishombudsman.org.uk

Crown Copyright 2003

HM Inspectorate of Education

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.