

St Paul's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	109269
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	377900
Inspection dates	22–23 February 2012
Lead inspector	Janet Dinsmore

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helene Bush
Headteacher	Julian Clements
Date of previous school inspection	27 June 2007
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Janet Dinsmore

Additional inspector

John Worgan

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The team observed 18 lessons taught by nine teachers. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and governors. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation, including school development plans, monitoring of teaching, incident logs, minutes of governing body meetings and reports from external monitoring visits. Questionnaires were received from 72 parents and carers and these were analysed alongside those received from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

St Paul's is a slightly smaller than average-sized primary school serving an urban area. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. There are an average number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs.

The school meets the current floor standard. There is pre-school provision on site, not managed by the governing body, which is subject to a separate inspection.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- St Paul's is a good school. Pupils and all members of the school community are highly valued as individuals. Moreover, the school's inclusive ethos, outstanding promotion of spirituality and commitment to wider cultural education ensure that pupils become well-rounded and confident young people by the time they leave. The school is not outstanding because the proportion of outstanding teaching is not yet high enough to ensure that the pace of learning is accelerated for all groups of learners in every lesson.
- Achievement is good as pupils make better progress than typically expected nationally and attain above average standards, particularly in English. They learn to read well in Key Stage 1 and apply these skills well as they move through the school. They enthusiastically engage with well-planned learning opportunities and communicate well, both orally and in writing. They also apply mathematical knowledge well.
- Teaching is good because teachers' good subject knowledge and effective curriculum planning engage pupils well. Pupils are actively engaged and good marking and assessment mean that pupils know what they need to do to improve. Nevertheless, the pace of learning is not consistently brisk in all lessons.
- Pupils are well behaved and safe because of the strong relationships that permeate the school community. Pupils act responsibly, with consideration for others and any rarely occurring, minor incidents of bullying are dealt with immediately because there is a strong relationship with parents and carers.
- Leadership and management are good because targeted improvements in teaching are well led, although opportunities for professional development with regard to sharing outstanding practice are not yet extensive. There has been consolidation of good practice since the previous inspection and good use of data for measuring pupils' progress and evaluating teachers' performance. However, leaders and managers at all levels are not yet fully involved in monitoring and evaluation, including the review of measurable targets for school improvement, particularly relating to achievement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that a greater proportion of lessons is outstanding by:
 - ensuring a brisk pace of learning and appropriate challenge for all groups of learners, especially the more able
 - strengthening professional development opportunities through coaching and mentoring so that outstanding practice can be shared.
- Develop leadership capacity and improve self-evaluation so that:
 - monitoring and evaluation activities are carried out by all staff
 - improvement planning has clearly measurable success criteria to raise achievement further.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is good. Pupils enter the school with a broad range of skills, some of which are below those typically expected for their age. Each cohort has a wide range of abilities and individual characteristics. Teachers' skill and their excellent relationships with pupils ensure that they achieve well, making good progress from their starting points in acquiring skills, particularly in speaking, listening and reading. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a good start to learning showing enthusiasm for discovery of shapes and explanation, as well as applying their knowledge of sounds to writing. Most reach the level of skills expected for their age at the end of the Reception year. This enthusiasm for learning continues throughout the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use sounding-out strategies and knowledge of letter sounds well when reading unfamiliar text. Pupils have above average reading skills at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 6. During the inspection, higher ability pupils in Year 6 were seen using their good reading skills to answer complex questions about the conditions in Victorian factories and recording this with neat handwriting. Attainment is significantly above average in English when pupils leave, with almost all pupils achieving the expected level (Level 4) in the last academic year and all pupils meeting or exceeding their targets. Groups of pupils, for example, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, achieve better than their peers nationally.

Attainment in mathematics has not been consistent for the last three years but school assessment data and inspection evidence show that pupils are now achieving as well in mathematics as they are in English. Year 1 pupils reported that they were 'getting good at adding up' and computation skills are well taught throughout the school by giving pupils challenging activities that require application of these skills. The school tracks the assessment of individual pupils regularly and rigorously. As a result, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable also make good progress. Any underachievement is quickly identified and action taken to accelerate progress. Parents and carers say that their children are making good progress at the school

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and inspection evidence endorses this view.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good and teachers use their accurate knowledge of pupils' starting points to plan exciting activities that motivate and engage pupils and ensure that all groups make good progress. Questioning is used well by all staff and supports pupils in developing good speaking skills. Recent developments in the teaching of mathematics are being used well by teachers. For example, in Year 5, pupils used their knowledge of tables to investigate prime numbers and made good progress in applying systematic methods to the task. Pupils in Year 2 made good progress in division skills by exploring repeated subtraction using number lines and arrangement of blocks. Middle and higher ability pupils in Year 4 had good knowledge of place value and could order decimal numbers well, later applying these skills to interpreting more complex scales and so making good progress. In a minority of lessons, progress is slowed for the most able by involving them in explanation that is intended for middle ability groups. Good use is made of well-trained teaching assistants to support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and also pupils who speak English as an additional language; this results in accelerated progress for those groups.

The curriculum is well planned to provide good links between subjects. Examples of this are measuring in mathematics and science, and the Victorians topic taught across Key Stage 2, which provides good links between English and history. All four classes had an opportunity to dress up and visit a 'Victorian School' for the day. Parents and carers comment that reading is taught well and books are changed frequently, particularly in Key Stage 1. Inspection evidence shows that reading is taught well throughout the school. The systematic teaching of sound/letter relationships is good and pupils in Years 3 and 4 were taught with tasks well matched to their ability to extend their knowledge of spelling. Lower ability pupils in Year 6 were given a good opportunity to review comprehension work and learn good skills for interpreting what they had read so that they could begin to answer more complex questions.

Assessment is used well. Pupils use self-assessment effectively to review their progress to the next level and marking clearly identifies the next steps in learning so pupils know how to improve their work. This is particularly the case in writing and results in good progress in developing this skill throughout the school. This is enhanced by staff ensuring that there is a motivational purpose for writing planned through the curriculum topics. Regular teacher assessment on a daily basis ensures that pupils build effectively on their prior learning and make good progress. In the few lessons where teaching is less successful, the pace of learning slows for some groups, particularly the more able.

Teachers make the most of opportunities to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, with spiritual development being particularly strong. In lessons a sense of amazement was evident in Year 5 when pupils discovered how sound can

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be transmitted through string. Similarly, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage engaged well with discovery and learning, excitedly exploring 'moon rock' with magnets, discussing what they had found and using their knowledge of letter sounds to begin writing and experimenting with letter order. All parents and carers say that their children are taught well, with typical comments including 'teachers work hard to get the best out of my child'. Parents and carers also appreciate the wider opportunities offered and the value the school places on providing a broad and balanced education that values the individual. Inspection evidence endorses this view.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Inspection evidence, including questionnaire responses, together with school records relating to incidents, all show that pupils' behaviour over time is consistently good. Pupils report that bullying occurs very rarely and is usually minor name calling; pupils have a good awareness of other forms of bullying, including cyber bullying. Pupils are courteous and show respect for each other and adults. They work well together in groups and with partners supporting each other's learning. Parents, carers and governors comment that the school has a 'family' atmosphere and this contributes strongly to the good behaviour. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is now above average and continuing to improve because of well-targeted actions by the school. Pupils value highly the 100% attendance certificates that are awarded and the cumulative house point system that rewards behaviour, contribution and learning, and eventually confers prefect status. Pupils say that they feel safe and parents and carers agree that their children are kept safe in school.

Leadership and management

School leaders have consolidated and improved on good practice since the previous inspection, particularly by ensuring that all teachers have a good grasp of assessment data and use it well to ensure all pupils are making good progress. Leaders demonstrate a strong capacity for further improvement. Although self-evaluation is accurate, not all staff are sufficiently involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's work. Plans for improvement are focused on actions resulting from self-evaluation but do not always include measurable targets for improvements in achievement. There are some good professional development opportunities for teachers and the school ensures that underperformance is tackled and weaknesses are addressed through mentoring. However, leaders acknowledge the need to share outstanding classroom practice more effectively. Termly summative assessments are tracked well and senior leaders meet with class teachers to ensure that all pupils are on track to make good progress.

The governing body ensures that equality is promoted and discrimination tackled effectively through the school's good policies. The inclusive nature of the school and the quality of relationships were commented on positively by parents and carers. Safeguarding arrangements meet all statutory requirements. Staff are well trained and know pupils well so that all groups are well cared for. The curriculum provides a

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broad and balanced experience and its contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is outstanding. The school has live and meaningful links with schools in Africa and India and pupils are fully aware of similarities and differences. The school community is cohesive, encompassing a diversity of ethnic groups. There are strong partnerships with other primary schools and local secondary schools that provide further opportunities for pupils to develop good skills in science, physical education and the arts and so aid good transition to secondary education.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



24 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Paul's Catholic Primary, Yate BS37 4EP

Thank you very much for making me and my colleague so welcome at your school and for talking to us about all the good things that happen and how much you enjoy it.

Yours is a good school. You do well in mathematics and especially in English, learning to read in the Reception class, Years 1 and 2, and using good reading skills as you move up the school. You participate very well in lessons and your teachers plan interesting work for you to do and ask you good questions to encourage you to explain what you are doing. This helps you learn really well because, as you told us, adults tell you what you need to do to improve your work. The variety of opportunities you have to do art, make music, go on trips and learn about the African school, as well as sharing in worship, means that you have excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. You behave well and responsibly, helping younger children and really enjoying all the facilities that you have outdoors at lunch time. You all get on really well together; your parents and carers said that your school is like a family and we agree. You also said that bullying is dealt with quickly and well and is very rare. Your good behaviour and the support you receive from adults help you develop into confident young people ready for secondary school.

To make your school even better we have asked the teachers to make sure that you are all working hard for more time in every lesson and that every one of you has work that challenges you. We have also asked that teachers know exactly how many of you are getting even better at your work while you are in each class.

We know that you will continue to work hard. Have great fun in the woodland walk and we wish you all the best as you go on learning.

Yours sincerely

Janet Dinsmore
Lead inspector

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