

St Paul's Cray Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	101647
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	376608
Inspection dates	22–23 February 2012
Lead inspector	Melanie Knowles HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandrine Probst
Headteacher	Wendy Macallister
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 June 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Mrs M Knowles

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mr J Sweet

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons, taught by eight teachers. Four of these were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, an inspector made a visit to a group 'mini-motivator' session led by the learning mentor and made short visits to all classrooms with the inclusion manager to look at provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. An inspector also listened to a group of pupils from Year 2 reading. Meetings were held with two groups of pupils from Key Stage 2, two members of the governing body and school staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at relevant documentation including data on pupils' attainment, progress and attendance, school development plans, key policies and evidence of the school's monitoring. Inspectors also looked at a sample of pupils' work books and teachers' lesson plans. They analysed 100 parents' and carers' questionnaires and others completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

St Paul's Cray Church of England School is an average-sized primary school with a maintained Nursery. The school serves a diverse community with half of the pupils coming from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds and half from White British backgrounds. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils who join and leave the school at different times during the school year. The proportion of pupils from Romany or Gypsy heritage is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs is above average, as is the proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. The majority of these pupils have specific learning difficulties or behavioural, social or emotional difficulties. There are also a significant number of pupils with moderate learning difficulties and speech, language and communication difficulties. The government's floor standard, which sets minimum expectations for attainment and progress, was met in 2011. The school has gained the 'Activemark' and has 'Healthy School' status.

The school runs a breakfast club for pupils and there is an after-school club which is managed by an independent company.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It provides a good standard of care and support for its pupils, especially for those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. The vast majority of parents and carers are very positive about the school. The school is not yet providing a good standard of education because some pupils do not achieve as well as they should.
- Overall, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has risen since the previous inspection, but school leaders have correctly identified that boys do not achieve as well as girls. Inspection evidence confirms the school's view that the gap is beginning to close, but boys are still not achieving as well as they should.
- The quality of teaching varies across the school. As a result of good teaching in Years 5 and 6 pupils make good progress in their learning. In the Early Years Foundation Stage some children make very good progress, but teaching does not enable the boys to make accelerated progress from their low starting points and so they enter Year 1 with low levels of language and mathematical development. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers do not make consistently good use of a range of strategies to ensure that all pupils are engaged with their learning. They miss opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance learning in lessons. Sometimes the work set for pupils does not meet their needs.
- Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and there is very good provision for those pupils who find it difficult to manage their behaviour. Behaviour overall is satisfactory and pupils say they feel safe.
- The headteacher and her new senior team track pupils' progress carefully, but do not currently look in sufficient detail at patterns of achievement among different groups of pupils. This means that they have not always intervened quickly enough to address underperformance. Senior staff monitor the quality of teaching and learning rigorously and the headteacher has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in her staff team.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress to be at least good, particularly for boys, by improving the quality of teaching ensuring that:
 - teachers' expectations are consistently high
 - best practice in teaching is shared and built on across the school
 - teachers use a variety of strategies to ensure that all pupils are engaged in their learning
 - pupils have more opportunities to use ICT in lessons.

- Ensure that the needs of groups and individual pupils are met by:
 - enhancing data analysis so that any patterns of underachievement are spotted quickly
 - ensuring that teachers plan work that is precisely matched to the needs of pupils.

- Develop practice across the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensuring that:
 - all children make good progress from their starting points
 - stimulating resources and a rich variety of activities are available across the six areas of learning, both inside and outside
 - all adults maximise opportunities to interact with children and extend their learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Most parents and carers say they are happy with the progress that their children make at St Paul's. The inspection team found that some pupils achieve well at the school, particularly those who are learning English as an additional language, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils who come from Gypsy or Traveller backgrounds. However, for most pupils achievement over time is satisfactory in English and mathematics. Pupils generally have positive attitudes to learning. They cooperate well with each other and share resources effectively.

Assessments indicate that most children have skills well below those expected for their age in all areas of learning when they join the school in the Nursery. Some children make good progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This year an increased proportion joined Year 1 with levels of attainment at the expected levels for their age. School tracking indicates that in recent years boys have not made enough progress to make up lost ground as they move through the school and have left Year 6 with lower-than-average skills in reading, writing and mathematics. School leaders have taken action to address this. They have made the curriculum more interesting and relevant for boys and have introduced outdoor

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learning in the 'forest school'. This is beginning to have an impact, but observations during the inspection showed that some teachers do not ensure that boys are actively engaged in learning, particularly during whole-class sessions. As a result, they become fidgety and lose concentration. This lack of focus on their work, however brief, slows progress.

Attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 dipped to below average levels in 2011. The school has had a focus on improving attainment in reading this year and has introduced daily teaching of sounds and letters in Key Stage 1. Younger pupils are increasingly able to break down unknown words into individual sounds so that they can read them successfully. A wide choice of fiction and non-fiction books and high quality group reading sessions enable many older pupils to make good progress in their reading. Attainment in reading at Key Stage 2 has improved over the last three years and was slightly above average in 2011.

Recently improved systems for tracking allow school leaders to monitor every pupil's progress. The headteacher meets with teachers at regular intervals to discuss the performance of pupils and, if there is underachievement, she agrees with teachers what action will be taken. Some well-targeted support programmes, particularly for reading, have enabled pupils to catch up, but other interventions have been less successful. The school has a number of pupils with complex needs and there have been some notable successes in enabling these pupils to make progress in their learning. Overall, most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

Quality of teaching

The overwhelmingly positive responses from parents and carers to the inspection questionnaires show that they feel their children are taught well. The practice seen during the inspection and work in pupils' books indicate that teaching is satisfactory overall and this explains the pupils' satisfactory progress over time. Although the quality of teaching is not yet consistently good across all classes, there are some good aspects to practice. There are positive relationships between staff and pupils and a strong culture of respect and trust. Teachers promote pupils' moral and social development by consistently applying the school's behaviour policy and encouraging cooperation and teamwork. They plan topics that are relevant to pupils and are becoming more confident in making links between subjects. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, groups of pupils were reading and researching from different non-fiction texts that were carefully chosen by the teacher to support the work she had planned on report writing and linked to a topic on 'caring for the environment'. Teachers' marking is generally thorough and most gives clear guidance to pupils on what they need to improve.

In the best lessons expectations are high, all pupils are engaged in their learning and the pace is brisk. For example, in a lesson in the Nursery the teacher introduced the words 'same' and 'different'. She helped children to practise using the words, engaged the children in a practical activity matching pairs of socks, helped them to

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count the socks and develop their hand control by pegging the socks on a washing line – all in 15 minutes!

The school has a large number of well-trained teaching assistants and some make a significant contribution to learning in lessons. Teachers sometimes allocate adult help to a group for too long or when it is not needed. As a result, pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop the skills to learn and work independently.

The new classrooms for Nursery and Reception are bright and well resourced, but the indoor and outdoor areas do not provide a language-rich environment and writing areas are uninspiring. Role-play areas are underdeveloped and do not provide links across areas of learning. Adults support children well in teacher-directed learning activities, but some are less skilled in interacting with children when they are at play and miss opportunities to extend their learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

All the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire say their children feel safe at school and the pupils confirm this. Pupils say that bullying in any form is at a low level and parents, carers and pupils agree that the school deals with any cases of bullying effectively. Older pupils understand risks, for example with the use of the internet, and understand how to minimise them.

A large majority of parents and carers agree that there is a good standard of behaviour at the school, but a few say that their children's lessons are disrupted by bad behaviour. Pupils say that behaviour is better in the classroom than on the playground and in their responses to the questionnaire only half of pupils said they felt that behaviour in school is good most of the time. Inspectors found that behaviour on the playground was satisfactory. Behaviour seen in lessons was generally good, but in the lessons where the teaching was satisfactory, low-level chatter and pupils' lack of focus on their work slowed their progress. However, in all lessons pupils were respectful to adults and responded quickly to the teacher's direction. Scrutiny of the school's behavioural records indicates that behaviour has improved over time and disruption is now unusual.

The school has been successful in raising attendance so that it is almost in line with national averages and in reducing levels of persistent absence. The learning mentor supports 'at risk' pupils effectively and initiatives, such as the early morning 'mini-motivators' club, have had a beneficial impact. There are numerous examples of how the personalised care at St Paul's has helped individual pupils to develop their confidence, improve their behaviour and overcome barriers to learning.

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Leadership and management

There have been significant changes to the senior leadership team since the previous inspection and several teachers have been promoted to more senior roles since September 2011. The headteacher has created a strong, dedicated team who demonstrate consistently good practice in their own teaching. They have already started to have an impact. Senior leaders use a variety of strategies to monitor the quality of teaching; for example, observing lessons, reviewing planning and reviewing pupils' progress. Targets for teachers' performance are usefully linked to measurable outcomes for pupils. The headteacher has made good use of training courses to develop the skills of middle and subject leaders so that they can make a full contribution to school improvement.

The governing body is very supportive and keen to develop its role in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. Safeguarding is taken seriously and the school has robust systems and procedures for child protection. School leaders and governors have good regard to the need to promote equality and avoid discrimination and diversity is celebrated. However, school leaders recognise that there is more to be done to analyse patterns in the performance of different groups to ensure that none is disadvantaged.

School leaders have been successful in improving some areas of the school's work since the previous inspection. For example, attendance has improved and teachers' marking now gives good guidance to pupils on what they need to improve. Actions taken to improve teachers' skills in making assessments have led to more reliable judgements about pupils' progress. School leaders and governors have a good understanding of what the school needs to do to improve further and school development plans have appropriate priorities and clear targets for improvement that can be monitored through the year. These improvements and the strengthening of the leadership team demonstrate that the school has the capacity to continue to improve.

The curriculum is satisfactory and promotes pupils' spiritual and cultural development well. Teachers try to make learning more relevant to pupils by linking subjects together and holding 'themed' weeks. The development of the 'forest school' and the opportunity to learn outside the classroom is proving popular with pupils. The school's church foundation makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to be reflective about beliefs and they show respect for cultural differences.

Relationships with parents and carers are good. The learning mentor and family worker have built close links with families facing challenging circumstances and help to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly. A very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agree that the school keeps them well informed and helps them to support their children's learning.

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 Cray Church of England Primary School, Orpington
BR5 3WD**

Thank you for making us feel welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting some of you, reading your views about the school in the questionnaires and seeing children from Nursery and Reception having fun in the forest school. Yours is a satisfactory school.

We found that the staff at the school care for you well and give very good support to those of you who need extra help to manage in school. More of you are coming to school regularly and this is helping you to make the most of your education. You told us that the school deals with rare occurrences of all types of bullying very well and this helps you to feel safe in school. You said that the teachers explain to you how you can improve your work and we agree that teachers' marking gives helpful comments about what you need to do to make your work better. In the questionnaires you completed some of you told us that behaviour is not always good in your school. We saw that behaviour in lessons and outside on the playground was at least satisfactory and sometimes good. You work well together and are always respectful to staff.

We have asked your school to do three things to help it become even better:

- make sure that all of you make good progress in the subjects you learn
- check carefully how well you are doing and adjust lesson plans so that the work that is set for you is not too easy and not too hard
- make sure that boys and girls have a good start to their education in Nursery and Reception.

I hope you will play your part by continuing to work hard and coming to school every day. You can also help by letting teachers know if the work is too easy or difficult for you. Thank you for an enjoyable visit to your school and best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Melanie Knowles
Her Majesty's Inspector

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