

St Paul's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108836
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	377825
Inspection dates	13–14 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Susan Waugh

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	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Irene Davison
Headteacher	Yvonne Gray
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 16 lessons taught by nine teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work, looked at curriculum plans, scrutinised pupils' work and children's learning journeys and analysed data about pupils' progress. They took account of the 82 questionnaires returned by parents and carers. The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The rate of progress of all pupils and in particular those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- How well teachers support pupils to make rapid progress during a lesson.
- The impact of middle leaders on the work of the school.

Information about the school

The school is slightly smaller than average and serves children who live in the area around Ryhope. The vast majority are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly higher than the national average. The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark and National Healthy School status.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. Pupils' personal outcomes are strengths. Pupils believe that teachers 'truly care' about them and this is enhanced by the good guidance and support they receive. They have an exceptional understanding of how to be healthy and eagerly participate in the many opportunities to improve their health and well-being. Pupils feel and know how to stay safe. They behave well.

Most children enter school with starting points below those expected for their age. Because of recent improvements, children now make good progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils make uneven progress as they move through the rest of the school, but their achievement is satisfactory overall and improving. As a result, their attainment is broadly average in all subjects by the end of Year 6.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Where teaching is good, it has a clear purpose and pupils are fully engaged because the work is challenging and well matched to their ability levels and, as a result, pupils' progress in these lessons is good. Pupils have enough time to practise what they have learned and teachers intervene quickly when pupils do not fully understand what they are doing. In lessons that are no better than satisfactory, pupils are not always clear about what they are learning or how to take the steps to achieve the lesson objective, and some are not provided with appropriately challenging activities. In all lessons, teaching assistants support those with special educational needs and/or disabilities closely so that they make good progress.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It has been reviewed recently to interest and further motivate pupils. Provision for the teaching of basic skills is adequate but pupils' opportunities to practise their skills across a range of subjects are inconsistent. Partnerships with local organisations have enriched the curriculum, as well as providing good support for pupils' well-being. The curriculum is well tailored to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Leaders and managers have a clear vision and ambition for the school's success. Members of the governing body are fully involved in the school and provide effective support and challenge. There is frequent monitoring of pupils' progress so that leaders are fully aware of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. This level of rigour is not always applied to the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, because

middle leaders are less systematically involved. In some areas, plans to address weaknesses lack precision.

Middle leaders make a valuable contribution towards developing the curriculum, but they are not fully involved in monitoring and evaluation in order to gain a full picture of what needs to be done. Recent improvements in children's attainment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, at the end of Year 2 and in Year 6, and improvements in attendance, demonstrate the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Up to 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that attainment rises further by:
 - consistently planning work so that it is clear what pupils will learn and know the steps they need to take to meet the objectives
 - always giving pupils clearer indications of how to improve their work when they give feedback in lessons and mark pupils' work
 - ensuring that all staff match work closely to the different needs of all individuals and that there is always sufficient challenge built into learning
 - reducing the amount of 'teacher talk' in some lessons so that pupils have more opportunities to practise the skills they have been taught.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - further developing the expertise of middle leaders in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school, including observing lessons, in order to drive improvement
 - refining school improvement planning so that in all areas it is precisely targeted on key priorities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

In lessons, pupils have a positive attitude, work diligently and make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. An overwhelming majority respond well to the teaching they receive because relationships with staff are very good. Pupils enjoy school, which contributes to their overall satisfactory achievement. Pupils respond enthusiastically to imaginative teaching, for example, the visit of a 'Roman centurion', or by exploring a book character's emotions and reactions. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from the constructive support they are given by teaching assistants and other adults which meets their specific needs well. Consequently, they make good progress.

Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is in no small degree aided by their participation in artistic, cultural and sporting activities. Pupils are well informed about how to stay safe and they demonstrate a desire to be involved in the

wide range of after-school sports. They know about making the correct choices to support eating healthily, and a well-planned programme ensures that they are fully aware of the dangers of drugs and alcohol, for example. They also understand that the school counsellor is there to support their emotional well-being. All of this contributes to their exceptional understanding of how to be healthy. Pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility in school, for example, as a member of the school council or by being buddies. They also contribute to the wider community, for example, by making charitable collections and singing carols in the local hospital. Pupils' basic skills are developed satisfactorily and they attend school regularly. Consequently, they are suitably prepared for their future lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In good lessons where there is clear organisation, purpose and structure, along with high expectations of pupils, learning moves along briskly and pupils are encouraged to be active and to practise skills on their own. Frequent checks are made to ensure pupils understand what they are learning. In less successful lessons, teachers spend too long explaining, with pupils listening passively. Pupils are not always clear about the focus of learning, and teachers sometimes do not use assessment information sufficiently to match work closely to pupils' differing needs. Consequently, their learning progresses at a slower pace. Teaching assistants effectively support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to ensure their consistently good progress. This is achieved through a careful blend of support and encouragement to work on their own and knowledge about pupils' individual needs. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but sometimes there is insufficient guidance given to pupils about how to improve.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs satisfactorily. It has been reviewed to make it more interesting, for example, learning Spanish, and to ensure that pupils acquire a relevant range of skills. However, there is no planned programme to extend pupils' knowledge of other cultures, or to ensure that their basic skills are reinforced

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

systematically across a range of different subjects. The curriculum meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities well: for example, staff use Makaton, a system of signing combined with talking, for pupils with a hearing impairment. The recent introduction of a structured scheme of work to support reading and writing has been successful in bringing about improvements in the rate of pupils' progress. A range of visitors and visits enhances pupils' learning and enjoyment. Pupils' personal development is promoted particularly well through the curriculum.

Parents and carers appreciate the good care, guidance and support their children receive. This is underpinned by adults' very good knowledge of each child and their family. Those whose circumstances make them potentially more vulnerable are particularly well supported because of the effective systems the school has in place and because of adults' continuing concern for their welfare, even after they have left the school. The school counsellor is valued by pupils and parents and carers and her role is highly effective in ensuring that transition to the next phase of education progresses smoothly. Good partnerships with other organisations have a positive impact on pupils' attendance and well-being.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Staff fully support the drive for improvement which is being led by the headteacher and governing body. Senior leaders monitor the school's performance and provision satisfactorily overall. As a result, pupils' achievement is improving and the curriculum has become more stimulating. Middle leaders are taking an increasingly greater responsibility for developing the curriculum and for identifying pupils who are not achieving as well as they could. However, they are not yet fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school so their impact on school improvement is currently limited.

A rigorous and detailed programme for monitoring pupils' progress is in place. However, the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning has not fully involved middle leaders who have less knowledge about what precisely needs to be done to improve and this is reflected in their plans.

The governing body makes a good contribution to the work of the school. Its members check the performance of the school regularly to provide appropriate challenge. Procedures to safeguard pupils are good, characterised by effective systems which are regularly checked. The partnerships the school forges are one of its strengths and impact positively on the quality of provision. All groups of pupils have equal opportunities to develop their skills and talents. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and the school is working hard to reduce the inconsistencies in

the rates of progress of different groups of pupils. There is a good commitment to promoting community cohesion and the school knows its own community well. Pupils understand about some cultures in the wider world but have limited understanding about the diversity of life in their own country.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Staff now have a clear picture of the strengths of the provision and of what needs to be done to improve it further. Teaching is good and staff use information from observations effectively to plan activities which are well matched to children's needs. Partnerships with external agencies all support children's learning and development well. As a result of recent developments to provision, children now make good progress in all areas of learning and development to reach expected standards when they enter Year 1.

Children settle happily and quickly into school because staff make sure that they get to know the children and their parents and carers well. Staff create a calm and caring atmosphere, acting as exemplary role models. Children respond to this by behaving well and feeling safe. Procedures to ensure children's welfare fully meet requirements. Children confidently choose activities for themselves, both indoors and outdoors whilst adults play alongside them and skillfully help to develop their language skills and nurture their imagination. A wide range of resources provides stimulation and engagement but sometimes these lack challenge for children with a higher level of capability.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was below average for a primary school. Of those who did respond, an overwhelming majority was extremely positive about all aspects of the school. For example, they expressed high praise for how much their children enjoy school and are kept safe. They were also very positive about the way the school helps their children to make progress and the leadership and management of the school. A very few parents and carers expressed concern that they did not receive enough information about what their child was learning and how well they were achieving in school. Inspectors found that procedures to inform parents and carers about this information were appropriate.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Paul's CofE Primary 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 inspection team received 82 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 224 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	48	62	27	35	0	0	2	3
The school keeps my child safe	52	68	25	32	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	34	44	38	49	2	3	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	45	40	52	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	49	39	51	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	39	40	52	5	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	43	43	56	1	1	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)	34	44	40	52	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	43	42	55	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	35	47	61	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	40	41	53	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	37	48	39	51	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	51	38	49	0	0	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. 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.

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.



15 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Paul's CofE Primary School, Sunderland, SR2 0LW

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you. We were pleased to hear that you know so much about how to stay healthy and to keep safe. It was interesting to learn that you understand about how to be good neighbours in the local community. I list some of the other things we found out.

- Yours is a satisfactory school where you make satisfactory progress in your learning and reach standards that are similar to those reached nationally by the time you leave.
- You make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The care, guidance and support the school gives you are good.
- Your school works well with different partners to improve your education.

Part of our job is to identify how the school can be even better. We have asked the headteacher, members of the governing body and teachers to make the school more effective by doing the following things.

- Improve the quality of teaching overall.
- Help all leaders to think carefully about what they want to improve in the school so that it makes the biggest difference to the progress you make.

You can help your school improve even further by continuing to attend school regularly and working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Susan Waugh
Lead inspector

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