

St Paul's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number 108502

Local authority Newcastle Upon Tyne

Inspection number 377768

Inspection dates 19–20 October 2011

Reporting inspector Lee Owston

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

Type of school Primary

School category Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils3-11Gender of pupilsMixedNumber of pupils on the school roll254

Appropriate authority The governing body

ChairGeorge CurryHeadteacherJudith SwordDate of previous school inspection13 January 2009School addressVictoria Street

Newcastle-upon-Tyne

NE4 7JU

 Telephone number
 0191 2733667

 Fax number
 0191 2732584

Email address admin@stpauls.newcastle.sch.uk

Age group 3-11
Inspection date(s) 19-2

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons or part lessons taught by 10 different teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leadership team, Chair of the Governing Body, groups of pupils and representatives of the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including school improvement planning, a variety of school policies, including those for safeguarding, records of pupils' progress, pupils' work and the school's self-evaluation procedures. Inspectors also took account of responses to the inspection questionnaires returned by 121 parents and carers, 108 pupils and 24 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The quality of learning and the current rates of progress made by pupils across the school, particularly in English.
- The quality of teaching and how well teachers use assessment information to enable all groups of pupils to achieve their potential, especially at Key Stage 1.
- The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage in providing children with a strong basis on which to build their future learning.
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers, at all levels, in addressing key issues and ensuring a sustained capacity for improvement.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average at double the national figure. Over half of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and similar proportions speak English as an additional language, although fewer pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. The percentage of those with a statement of special educational needs is lower than that found nationally.

Since the previous inspection, the Nursery now operates part time and in the mornings only. Some Reception-aged children are taught in a mixed Year 1 class. A new deputy headteacher took up post during the summer term 2011.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequatePlease turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have not been adequately addressed. Some aspects of the school's work, most notably pupils' learning and progress across all key stages, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, have weakened since the last inspection. The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is now inadequate and pupils' attainment remains too low at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils' progress across the school is no better than satisfactory. This rate of progress, with little sign of improvement, together with low attainment means that pupils' overall achievement is inadequate.

Teachers have good relationships with pupils and manage behaviour well. Nevertheless, although the teaching observed during inspection was generally satisfactory, it is not strong enough across the school to help pupils overcome previous underachievement and make the progress required to raise their attainment securely or quickly enough. The planning of work to meet the different needs of individual pupils is underdeveloped and teachers do not routinely use the assessment information available to them to ensure that all learners are challenged. As a result, teaching is often too highly structured which prevents middle- and higher-ability learners, in particular, from showing their true potential. This prevents pupils from making the faster progress necessary to narrow the gap to national averages and halt the declining trend in attainment.

The curriculum does not meet pupils' academic needs. Pupils enjoy a range of activities designed to enrich their learning experiences and develop their personal development and well-being. However, insufficient emphasis has been placed on securing the basic skills needed to allow more productive learning in all subjects of the curriculum. At present, too few opportunities are provided for pupils to develop or apply their skills within different contexts and subjects.

Pupils show a keen appreciation of the range of cultures present at St Paul's and an inclusive atmosphere in which to learn has been developed by the school. As a

result, pupils work together harmoniously and know the difference between right and wrong. This is reflected in their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance remains too low. The percentage of persistently absent pupils has increased in the last year and, despite some small gains recently, improvement in this area is fragile. Engagement with some parents and carers is not as strong as it could be to ensure pupils attend school more frequently so they do not miss out on learning.

The significant weaknesses in pupils' outcomes and in the quality of provision have not yet been addressed successfully by the school's leadership. The pace of change to address low and declining attainment across the school has been too slow. Leaders and managers have not been able to bring about significant improvements because they have not recognised the urgent need to drive up attainment, secure a faster rate of progress for pupils and move the school forward rapidly. Although the school has identified the appropriate areas for improvement, its self-evaluation is weak because it lacks rigour and fails to provide an accurate view of current performance. Development planning is not rigorous enough to allow all leaders and managers to drive improvement. The lack of clearly measurable outcomes, within appropriate timescales, prevents the leadership team from accurately measuring the impact of the development plan in addressing key issues. The capacity to bring about sustained improvement is therefore inadequate.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve rates of progress across the school by:
 - ensuring all teachers use their knowledge of where pupils are at in their learning to plan and deliver lessons that more closely match the needs of all groups and individuals
 - providing an appropriate balance between learning that is teacher-led and that which allows pupils to engage practically and work independently
 - planning opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their basic skills within a range of contexts and subjects of the curriculum
 - applying the marking policy consistently so that all pupils know where they are in their learning, what they need to do next to improve and have sufficient time to act upon their teacher's advice.
- Improve the impact of all leaders and managers, including the governing body, on pupils' achievement by:
 - ensuring school development planning includes clearly measurable outcomes, within defined timescales, so that the impact of improvement initiatives on pupil outcomes can be measured
 - implementing a rigorous monitoring and evaluation timetable so that the impact of initiatives to improve provision and outcomes are clearly known
 - increasing the involvement of subject leaders and providing them with more opportunities to monitor the quality of provision and tackle weaknesses within their areas of responsibility
 - ensuring the governing body holds the school to account and is more rigorously involved in the evaluation of provision and outcomes.

- Improve the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children get off to the best possible start in their learning by:
 - using observations and assessments of children's learning to plan tasks which meet their individual learning needs and interests
 - planning opportunities for greater adult—child interaction during those activities which children choose for themselves
 - involving children in making decisions about their own learning
 - ensuring continuity, progression and equality of opportunity for all children of Nursery and Reception age.
- Improve pupils' attendance by engaging more with parents and carers to ensure that their children attend regularly so they do not miss out on learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to learn. Where teaching is strongest, pupils are engaged, motivated and inspired to give their best. This is usually because the teacher provides learning which links to their interests, allows them to participate fully in their own learning and challenges them sufficiently to make faster progress. Where teaching is not matched to pupils' interests and abilities, pupils often appear bored and some become distracted. The majority usually remain compliant and try to complete the activities provided.

Pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills well-below expected levels for their age. The unvalidated data for 2011 indicate that overall attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 was significantly below average. This represents satisfactory progress given pupils' starting points and capabilities. Appropriately targeted support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities means that these pupils make the same progress as their peers. Attainment in English has continued to decline since 2008 so that it is now low by the end of Year 6. The school has identified that this is due to exceptionally low attainment in writing across the school. Some strategies have been implemented to raise attainment in this area but these have not been monitored by leaders and managers with sufficient frequency or rigour to ensure that the decline is halted. Even at Key Stage 1, the standard of writing remains low and the trend of underachievement continues. Inspectors' observations of lessons and their scrutiny of past and current work in English and mathematics confirmed this low attainment. Current school data and target-setting indicate little evidence of improvement. This, together with teaching that has not been strong enough over time to accelerate pupils' learning and progress beyond satisfactory, indicates that achievement is inadequate overall.

Pupils say they feel safe and are confident that concerns on such matters as bullying would be resolved effectively by class teachers. This view is shared by parents. Pupils are knowledgeable about healthy lifestyles and are quick to point to healthy options in the dining hall. They talk confidently about what needs to go in a healthy packed lunch and undertake a range of extra-curricular activities to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The school council contributes to the school community. Pupils support charity events to help those less fortunate than themselves but other initiatives, such

as 'playground buddies', have stopped. This prevents pupils from contributing further to their school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. As one pupil, typical of many, remarked, 'Though I am of a different faith, I belong here and have many friends'. Pupils have a clear picture of other faiths and cultures; they work cohesively with each other, and appreciate the differences and commonalities between them. Weaknesses in basic skills and low attendance across all year groups mean that pupils are inadequately prepared for their future lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	4
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account:	4
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Although the quality of teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory, the overall impact of teaching on pupils' achievement over time is not good enough to ensure that they all learn at a fast enough rate to raise attainment. While this inconsistency continues, pupils cannot make the rapid progress required to overcome past and current underachievement. In the better lessons, tasks were differentiated to match the range of abilities within the class, pupils were actively involved in their learning and there was sufficient opportunity for groups and individuals to work independently. However, teachers too often plan and deliver activities that fail to meet pupils' needs. This is because inadequate use is made of the assessment information available to them about their class. As a result, some pupils find the work too hard because they have not acquired essential basic skills that would support their learning and others are made to listen to teaching which lacks challenge. Lessons include too many tasks that are highly structured and teacher-led so that, particularly for pupils who are of middle or higher ability, opportunities to work more actively or independently are limited. This prevents all groups of pupils from making the accelerated progress required to raise attainment securely and guickly.

While the school has made some improvements to its marking and feedback policy, at present it is not consistently followed across the school. A substantial number of pupils are not routinely aware of how well they are doing in their learning or what they need to do next to improve. Even in the best examples of feedback seen during

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

the inspection, adequate time for pupils to respond to their teacher's advice was not provided to enable improved rates of progress.

The curriculum contains some positive features. For example, good use is made of visits and visitors to provide pupils with opportunities that they would not otherwise experience. However, overall, the curriculum does not adequately meet the academic needs of pupils. The development and application of basic skills are not given sufficient emphasis across all areas of the curriculum to enable significant gaps in pupils' knowledge to be addressed quickly. Recent improvements to the curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 1, have focused on the development of specific intervention programmes to address weaknesses in pupils' basic skills. However, the impact of these on pupil outcomes has not been well enough measured to ensure that they are the most appropriate way to drive improvement.

The school provides an effective level of pastoral care for its pupils. Pupils know that there is always an adult to turn to if they have concerns. New arrivals settle well and other potentially vulnerable pupils are well cared for, receiving appropriate support according to their social and emotional needs. Attendance for a significant proportion of pupils is low and showing little sign of improvement. The school does not fully engage with some parents and carers enough to improve attendance or ensure they are fully aware of the impact of poor attendance on their children's learning and attainment. As a consequence, the overall quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory rather than good.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

	1
The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account:	7
The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where	4
relevant, through partnerships	7
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, have failed to provide sufficient drive and challenge to effectively lead and manage the school. Leaders recognise that outcomes need to improve but there is little evidence that key issues, including those from the last inspection, are being addressed with the necessary urgency. Self-evaluation lacks rigour and is overgenerous in assessing the impact of provision on outcomes for pupils. This is because monitoring and evaluation of provision across the school are not routinely planned and lack focus. As a result, development planning is weak. It does not identify the most important areas currently affecting provision, such as the need for assessment information to be used effectively to match learning opportunities to the specific needs of individuals and groups. Although relative weaknesses in both English and mathematics have been acknowledged, the impact of strategies to address these has not been sufficient. Subject leaders do not monitor the quality of provision within their subjects frequently or rigorously enough to allow them to tackle significant areas of weakness and make more rapid improvements to pupils' attainment and progress.

The governing body cares about the school and its profile within the local community. Nevertheless, its involvement in monitoring the day-to-day provision of the school is limited, and this restricts its contribution to rigorous and effective evaluation of outcomes. Governance does not sufficiently challenge the school to bring about improvement at a sufficient pace. The governing body has too little impact on the direction and work of the school.

Safeguarding procedures are compliant with requirements and help to assure pupils' health and safety, of which parents and carers agree. Although systems for safeguarding are adequate, documentation relating to these important systems is brief and not presented as clearly as could be the case. The school strives to ensure all pupils have full access to what the school provides but at present those children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not receive equal entitlement. In particular, Reception-aged children, including those within the Year 1 class do not have the same access to outdoor play as their peers in Nursery. Not all groups of learners achieve equally well as the quality of teaching and the curriculum overall does not adequately meet the needs of all pupils. Although the school tackles discrimination, equality of opportunity is inadequate.

The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. The school has developed an understanding of the school's religious, ethnic and social context. Action is being taken to broaden pupils' understanding and appreciation of diversity within the United Kingdom and beyond through links with schools which reflect a different cultural and ethnic mix of pupils. The school engages satisfactorily with parents and carers, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that relationships are positive. Links with other agencies help to support those pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable but other than these partnerships, the school does not make enough links that lead to worthwhile improvements in pupils' achievement. The school provides inadequate value for money.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and	
driving improvement	4
Taking into account:	
The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the	
school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities	4
met	
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are well below those expected for their age, although their language and communication skills and abilities

are sometimes masked by the high proportion of children who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Across Nursery and Reception, children's progress is no better than satisfactory. Outcomes by the end of Reception Year are variable but in 2011 were low in comparison to the national average across a range of indicators. As a result, only a small minority of children entered Year 1 with the necessary skills and abilities to fully access the Key Stage 1 curriculum. Outcomes by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage are therefore inadequate overall.

Staff are welcoming and forge sound relationships with parents and carers so that children settle quickly into routines and feel safe. Welfare requirements are met, although there is not a strong enough promotion of personal hygiene routines, for example, during snack time. Learning journals show that a range of observations are being carried out to monitor children's learning and progress. These are shared and appreciated by parents. However, they are not being used sufficiently to adapt planning so that learning activities engage children and build on their interests and learning needs.

Significant issues from the last inspection have not been addressed adequately by leaders and managers. For example, staff do not plan for effective learning where children choose their own activities. Consequently, too many children spend a lengthy amount of time on one activity without any adult interaction to move their learning forward. Overall, activities do not engage, motivate or sustain children's attention as they are not planned from their own interests. Children therefore move from activity to activity in quick succession, making limited progress in their learning.

The Nursery and Reception staff do not work effectively together as one Early Years Foundation Stage. They therefore miss opportunities to share ideas and improve their practice. This leads to inconsistencies in provision between the Nursery, Reception and mixed Reception/Year 1 classes. For example, Reception children still take their break time with the rest of Key Stage 1 and do not have regular access to the outdoor environment, and those children of Reception age who are within a Year 1 class, do not receive their entitlement to child-initiated learning. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are not driving improvement quickly enough in key areas of provision to bring about greater improvements in outcomes or provision.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	4
Taking into account:	_
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4

Views of parents and carers

The return rate for the parents' and carers' questionnaire was above average for primary schools. The very large majority of those who replied were very positive in their views about the school. Most parents and carers commented on the friendly,

harmonious atmosphere within school and the approachability of staff. All agreed that the school keeps their children safe. Inspection evidence supports the positive responses that parents submitted about these aspects of the school's work. Of the small number of concerns raised, all were fully investigated and the findings are reflected in the inspection judgements.

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 121 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 254 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly garde		Agı	Agree Disagree			Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	89	74	31	26	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	87	72	34	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	67	55	48	40	4	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	53	44	60	50	3	2	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	64	53	55	45	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	53	44	60	50	4	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	55	45	63	52	3	2	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)	49	40	60	50	3	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	52	43	64	53	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	56	46	53	44	6	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	51	42	60	50	4	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	70	58	48	40	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	73	60	45	37	1	1	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)					
Type of school	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: 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.

■ 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.



21 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Paul's CofE Primary School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE4 7JU

Thank you all for the very warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you and are very grateful to all of you who talked with us. You really helped us to know what it is like at your school.

We were pleased to hear that you feel happy and safe in school. We were also impressed with your knowledge of healthy eating and the importance of diet and exercise. You are all certainly committed to living a healthy lifestyle. You know a lot about each other's faiths and cultures too, which helps you to get along with each other and work together so well. However, there are some very important things that your school needs to improve and because of this the inspectors have judged that it needs special measures. This means that the school will have extra help so that it can improve. Inspectors will visit the school regularly to see how things are improving. To help your school to improve, we have asked your headteacher, teachers and the governors to do the following things:

- ensure that your work in English and mathematics is not too easy and not too hard so that you can all make better progress and reach higher standards
- improve the way the school is led and managed by ensuring everyone checks more regularly on what is going on
- make sure that the children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to the best possible start with their learning
- work more closely with your parents and carers so that you attend school more regularly and can continue to learn.

You have an important part to play in improving your school. Continue to work hard for your teachers and ensure that you come to school every day so that you can make even better progress in your learning.

Yours sincerely

Lee Owston Lead inspector

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