

St Paul's Church of England Combined School

Stratford Drive, Wooburn Green, High Wycombe, HP10 0QH

Inspection dates 29–30 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- All staff, senior leaders and members of the governing body share the headteacher's extremely high standards and passion for improvement.
- The highly effective management of teachers' performance has led to outstanding teaching.
- Teaching inspires and motivates all pupils to do their very best and to play an active part in improving their learning.
All pupils enjoy the hard work entailed in the problem-solving and exciting tasks that are planned for them. This means that all groups of pupils make exceptional progress from their starting points.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes thrive in the homely atmosphere and enjoy experimenting with newly developed skills.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards which are significantly better than all pupils nationally.
- Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils show considerable care and respect for each other, and have extremely positive attitudes towards their learning. They also feel exceptionally safe.
- Members of the governing body play a significant part in making important decisions which drive the school forward.
- Pupils and staff succeed because they know they are valued.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons, taught by nine teachers.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, members of the governing body, the local authority, staff and groups of pupils.
- Joint observations of teaching and learning were conducted with the headteacher.
- The inspectors listened to pupils reading.
- The inspectors spoke to parents and took account of the 63 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and one e-mail in planning the inspection.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised pupils' workbooks, and looked at school policies, including those relating to safeguarding and equality, minutes of governing body meetings and planning documents.
- The inspectors took account of the 26 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Barbara Atcheson, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Glen Goddard

Additional inspector

Aileen King

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Paul's is a larger-than-average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for extra funds (known as the pupil premium) is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is well below average. Similarly, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below the national average.
- Most pupils are from a White British background.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has after-school 'wrap-around' care for Nursery children, which is managed by the governing body.
- The headteacher is a local leader of education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to share and extend the outstanding practice of delivering exciting, meaningful learning within the school and promote it more widely through a range of initiatives involving other schools and organisations.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children start school with typical skills for their age. On their journey through the school all groups of pupils make exceptional progress because lessons are exciting and meaningful and teaching is outstanding.
- Over the past five years, pupils at the end of Year 6 have reached standards which are significantly above those of all pupils nationally in reading and writing. However, they dipped to being above those of all pupils nationally in mathematics 2010 and 2011.
- Senior leaders quickly got to grips with where the weaknesses lay and took action. As a result, in 2012, pupils at the end of Year 6 once more reached standards in mathematics that were significantly above average.
- Adjustments to the way reading is taught resulted in an above-average proportion of more-able pupils reaching the higher Level 3 by the end of Year 2 in 2012.
- Although there are few disabled pupils or pupils with special educational needs, their needs are often medical and highly complex. The school makes every effort to adapt equipment and provides special one-to-one tuition that ensures that these pupils also make exceptional progress.
- The school makes certain that the few pupils who are known to be eligible for extra funding make similar progress to that of their peers. Extra support such as financial help for trips and funding for one-to-one tuition where needed ensures equality of access.
- Pupils relish the challenge on offer. For example, Nursery children take great care when making the first attempt at writing their name. Older pupils tackle problem solving enthusiastically because they are ready to think things out and call on earlier experiences, responding positively when teachers prompt them to do this.
- Pupils achieve so well in all subjects because their learning is interesting. 'Incidents', such as the landing of a space craft on the school playing field, ignite pupils' enthusiasm. High-quality art work and creative writing are a testament to their thirst for learning and desire to do well.
- Evidence from 'Parent View' and from discussion with parents confirms they are very happy with their children's progress. Parents appreciate the way in which the wrap-around care gives very effective continuity for Nursery-aged children in the afternoons.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The very high quality of the teaching is reflected not only in the pupils' exceptional rates of progress but also in the way in which they enthuse about their learning.
- Teachers plan work that is very well matched to pupils' learning needs. Pupils' responses in lessons and in their books show a high level of interest and interaction. This is because teachers are very skilled at providing a high level of challenge and ensuring that all pupils play an active part in their own learning.
- A good example of this was seen in a Year 5 literacy lesson where pupils were working in groups to write a television script. They showed great confidence when explaining their ideas. They challenged each other and often answered each other's questions. When asked what they thought the lesson had improved, the answer was a resounding, 'everything'.
- A group of children in the Reception class persevered as they struggled to meet the complex demands of estimating how many beads they could thread in one minute. They had to stop to think whether 20 was larger than six as they honed their skills in counting and writing their numbers correctly.
- Teachers and learning support assistants monitor pupils' progress in lessons very well and are skilled at using the information to adjust what they teach over the course of the lesson.
- Teachers use questioning extremely effectively to help pupils deepen and secure their

understanding.

- Reading, writing and mathematics are taught exceptionally well because teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They are skilled in planning exciting opportunities for pupils to use these skills across the curriculum, whether they are going on an 'undiscovered island adventure' or devising an adaptation of *Chariots of Fire*.
- Parents are tremendously positive when asked about their views on teaching in the school. This was reflected in the views of those who responded to the online 'Parent View'.
- Outstanding teaching has led pupils to understand their own part in learning. They know they have the right to achieve as much as they can but understand that that comes with the responsibility to work as hard as they can.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The strong emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development that underpins the work of the school ensures that pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are exemplary.
- The extremely well-honed behaviour policy, written in partnership with a neighbouring pupil referral unit, has stood the test of time. It is known to everyone, practised by everyone and accepted by everyone.
- Pupils feel extremely safe and know how to keep safe because the school is very thorough in ensuring pupils know and understand what they must do to keep safe.
- Pupils know about the different forms of bullying but say that there 'isn't really any bullying', insisting that 'the term can be overused; it can just mean people have fallen out'.
- Parents are extremely appreciative of what the school strives to achieve and say that any incident, although rare, is unfailingly 'dealt with swiftly and nipped in the bud'.
- Pupils are extremely punctual and very good at settling quickly to their work as they are eager to begin. Despite the hospitalisation of one or two sick pupils, attendance remains high because pupils thoroughly enjoy their time at school.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is passionately committed to improving pupils' achievement. Her strong belief that nothing but the best will do is shared by all. Using the expertise of a range of creative partners to extend pupils' horizons and make learning relevant, the curriculum has inspired pupils with a thirst for learning.
- Teachers' performance is managed in a highly effective way. Teachers are involved in their own audit of skills and this has ensured that they take a keen interest in improving their teaching skills. A rigorous programme to check the quality of teaching, backed by very good quality professional development and supported by coaching and mentoring by senior leaders, has maintained an outstanding level of teaching.
- The school has benefitted from the expertise of the local authority and the good level of support that it has brought, particularly with regard to training for staff and for the governing body. It now has a significant pool of expertise and experience in using different and interesting ways to motivate and inspire pupils to become high achievers.
- As a local leader of education, the headteacher's endeavours to support other schools add an extra dimension to the school's own ambitious programme for development. The school shares its outstanding practice within the school but does not fully promote it more widely outside. All teachers are held to account for pupils' progress at monthly meetings, where the school's accurate tracking system highlights any pupil who may be in danger of falling behind. This, together with the school's excellent care and guidance for all pupils, ensures that opportunities to learn are equal for everyone and that there is no discrimination.
- Parents, including a very large majority of those who responded to the Parent View survey, express high levels of satisfaction with the school's performance, including the way in

which it responds to any concerns, and agree that it provides them with valuable information about their children's progress.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Members of the governing body play a significant part in the strategic direction of the school. They have an accurate view of the school's performance, including the quality of teaching and how pupils' test results compare to those of other similar schools. Good quality local authority training ensures that they are knowledgeable and very well equipped to ask searching questions. They know a lot about the management of teachers' performance and how it is used to improve the quality of teaching. Governors are fully involved with setting targets for the school and hold it rigorously to account. They ensure that statutory duties such as safeguarding are met and that financial resources, including the pupil premium, are managed well.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	110469
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	403121

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 pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	267
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lorraine Couves
Headteacher	Ruth Goddard
Date of previous school inspection	4 October 2007
Telephone number	01628 521553
Fax number	01628 522450
Email address	headteacher@st-pauls.bucks.sch.uk

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