

# St Paul's Catholic Primary School

City Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 4SZ

**Inspection dates** 11–12 December 2012

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- All groups of pupils achieve well. As a result, pupils reach standards which are significantly above average by the end of Year 6.
- Children make good progress from the Reception year to Year 6 because of good teaching.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They are courteous and respectful to others. Consequently, behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils feel extremely safe and well cared for by staff.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural education underpins everything that happens in school and is a key strength.
- Attendance is above average.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and direction for pupils and staff. Together, leaders at all levels, including the governing body, are focused on improving teaching and pupils' achievement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons, tasks are too easy or too difficult for pupils and learning does not move on at a quick enough pace.
- The marking of pupils' work in mathematics does not always inform pupils what they need to do to improve.
- The outdoor learning environment and the opportunities it provides in Reception are not as good as those indoors.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons or part lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff, governors, a representative of the local authority, parents and carers and pupils.
- Inspectors examined school policies, information about the attainment and progress of pupils, teachers' plans, pupils' work and school improvement planning.
- Inspectors took into account the 65 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the 31 staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read.

## Inspection team

Adam Hewett, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Fran Ashworth	Additional Inspector
Derek Watts	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Other pupils are from a range of ethnic backgrounds including Indian, Irish and African. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority, for whom the school receives additional funding (the pupil premium), is well below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by making sure that:
  - teachers always set suitably challenging tasks for all groups of pupils so that work is not too easy or too difficult
  - learning moves along at a quick pace in lessons
  - marking in mathematics always informs pupils of what they need to do next to improve
- Develop the outdoor activities available to children in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that they learn as well as they do indoors.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- The school has maintained, and built on, the good achievement identified in the previous inspection.
- Children enter Reception with knowledge, understanding and skills broadly expected for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning due to good teaching and the exciting opportunities provided indoors. The outdoor learning environment does not offer similar quality learning experiences and so children make less progress there. By the end of Reception, children's attainment is above average.
- Good progress continues through Key Stages 1 and 2. As a result, by the end of Year 6, attainment is significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the good-quality guidance and support they receive. Some of these pupils have made rapid progress, particularly in mathematics.
- In most lessons, the more able pupils are suitably challenged and their learning extended. Occasionally, however, the rate of learning slows when the tasks set are too easy.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium progress well, especially in English, as a result of the effective small group work or one-to-one support. They are closing the gaps with all pupils nationally as a result.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language make progress in line with other pupils. This is because they are provided with very good opportunities to speak with their classmates and good practice is modelled very well for them by staff.
- Attainment in reading is consistently above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because of the school's strong focus on the teaching of reading skills and a love of reading. By Year 6, pupils speak confidently about the works of authors such as Charles Dickens and then apply this knowledge to their studies as they learn about the Victorians.
- Pupils write for a range of purposes and in different styles. Their writing is often lively and imaginative. For example, pupils in Year 2 wrote an imaginative alternative version of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are accurate. Consequently, achievement in writing is also strong.
- In mathematics, pupils gain knowledge and understanding of different methods and operations well. There are good examples of pupils applying skills to solve 'real life' mathematical problems. However, their progress is hindered at times because they are not always made aware of how they can improve their work.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching successfully promotes good learning and above average attainment over time. However, there are inconsistencies. Whilst there are examples of outstanding practice, there are also occasions when teaching is not as successful.
- Teachers establish very positive relationships with pupils and manage them particularly well. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is successfully promoted. As a result, pupils really enjoy learning and are extremely courteous and respectful to others. They work collaboratively or independently as required.
- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are provided with a range of interesting activities. There is an effective blend of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children. Children have plenty of opportunities to explore, be creative and learn independently. However, the outdoor learning opportunities are not as strong as those inside which limits their learning in this area. The school has clear plans to improve this situation.
- Teachers' explanations and instructions are clear and informative. The teaching of reading and

the strategies to develop pupils' reading skills work well. The one-to-one tuition has a positive impact on the progress of pupils who need extra help with literacy and numeracy skills. Teaching assistants are usually well deployed and provide help and support for those who need it.

- Most teachers make good use of the information they have about how well pupils are doing to plan their teaching and to match tasks to pupils' different abilities. As a result, pupils are suitably challenged and they make good progress in acquiring knowledge and deepening their understanding. At times, however, tasks are too long and pupils are not moved on to the main task soon enough. On these occasions progress slows.
- In the most successful lessons, teachers have very high expectations of pupils and make sure that they understand the reason for their learning. For example, in a Year 5 religious education lesson, pupils were able to apply their writing skills to producing a parable set in a modern context, demonstrating their own understanding and sense of right and wrong.
- Pupils have good opportunities to assess their own and others' learning. Teachers are good at providing constructive feedback on pupils' performance to help move their learning on.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' writing is effective. Good work is praised and constructive comments help pupils to improve. However, this good practice is less consistent in the marking of mathematics. As a result, pupils do not always know what they need to do next and this hinders the progress they could make.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning. They show great consideration and respect for others. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is typically exemplary and is supported by the school's records of behaviour.
- The school has a very positive and warm atmosphere where expectations of behaviour and conduct are always high. As a result, right from the start, children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the high quality relationships with adults.
- Pupils report that bullying very rarely occurs. They show a very clear understanding of different types of bullying, including name calling and cyber bullying. They know the steps to take to prevent bullying. The school has highly effective policies and procedures for dealing with misbehaviour, including bullying, should it occur.
- Attendance is consistently above average. Pupils really want to come to school and are particularly keen to arrive on time.
- The school promotes safety extremely well, resulting in a high degree of confidence amongst the pupils that the school will keep them safe. Pupils know how to manage their own safety. They have a very good understanding of internet safety and know what to do if cyber bullying were to occur. They are helped to develop their understanding of how to manage risk for themselves, such as those associated with road safety or drugs.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher and staff have created a positive and safe environment for pupils to learn and develop. All leaders and staff show a clear commitment to doing the best for the pupils.
- There is strong teamwork among the staff. Those who returned the questionnaire were very positive about the school. They are proud to be part of the school and have confidence in the leadership. They state that pupils are safe and well behaved. These positive comments reflect the findings of the inspection.
- The checking of the school's performance is effective and systematic. As a result, senior leaders and governors have a good understanding of what the school's strengths are and which areas are in need of improvement.
- Since the previous inspection, the role of the subject leaders has been developed and

strengthened. This enables them to play a more effective part in checking performance and improving their area of responsibility.

- Senior leaders place much emphasis on improving teaching and learning. Through lesson observations, senior leaders have a clear overview of teaching. There are good procedures for managing the performance of staff. Targets and plans to enhance their practice are well linked to pupils' progress and to the school's priorities for improvement. However, some inconsistencies remain between the quality of teaching in some classes and subjects, and the school is aware of the need to address these.
  - Training opportunities and support are helping the development of teaching. Decisions about promotion and salary increases are linked to a teacher's responsibilities and performance.
  - The curriculum provides a good range of subjects and additional activities, although there are shortcomings in the outdoor environment in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It promotes good achievement and contributes extremely well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the clubs and the educational visits on offer. Good links between subjects add meaning and relevance to pupils' learning.
  - The school's performance is consistently good, so light touch support from the local authority has been appropriate.
  - At St Paul's, all groups of pupils have equal opportunity to learn and develop. They have full access to the learning opportunities provided. Discrimination, in any form, is not tolerated.
  - Pupil premium funding is well planned and allocated to support the pupils who are eligible for it. One-to-one tuition in literacy and numeracy, class support and pastoral support all play a valuable part in supporting these pupils. The school's actions have had a positive impact on these pupils' achievement and on their personal development.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The governing body has a good understanding of the work that the school does and of how well it is doing. They have a clear overview of pupils' attainment and progress. Governors support the school and provide constructive challenge to hold it to account. Through training and development, governors are up to date with issues relating to the performance of staff and pupil premium funding. They have a good understanding of how the pupil premium funding is spent and the impact of the spending on the pupils' achievement. Governors ensure that performance management systems and pay progression for both teachers and leaders are closely linked to the achievement of pupils. Governors ensure that safeguarding procedures and practices meet requirements.
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110006
<b>Local authority</b>	West Berkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	403103

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	324
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Kalsen/Teresa Latch
<b>Headteacher</b>	Julia Feeney
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 March 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01189422003
<b>Fax number</b>	0118945924
<b>Email address</b>	office@stpauls.w-berks.sch.uk



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