

# St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

St Paul's Terrace, York, North Yorkshire, YO24 4BJ

**Inspection dates** 30–31 January 2013

<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		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. Attainment is usually significantly above average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils read exceptionally well for their age. This is a strength of the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make excellent progress, including those with the most complex needs.
- Teaching is good. Lessons are well-organised and pupils are keen to learn.
- Outstanding leadership of teaching gives teachers expert guidance on how to improve their practice.
- Pupils feel very safe. They say, 'We're not a bullying school,' and their parents agree.
- Pupils behave extremely well both in lessons and around the school. Older pupils look after younger ones and playtimes are fun.
- Attendance is now above average and shows improvement each year.
- Outstanding leadership and management ensure that the school's Christian values underpin pupils' education.
- Developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness lies at the heart of the school's rich curriculum.
- Governors give the school high level support and challenge. This helps the school to build on its strengths and to improve further.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not outstanding. Pupils have limited time in lessons to learn independently.
- Teaching does not always ensure that the work for more-able pupils makes them think hard for themselves.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons or parts of lessons taught by nine teachers. They also watched teaching assistants teach small groups of pupils.
- The inspection team observed lessons when pupils were taught how letters and sounds link together (phonics) and observed indoor and outdoor learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' English and mathematics books in Years 5 and 6 and sampled pupils' work in other year groups to check the standards of their work and how much progress pupils had made since the start of the academic year.
- A group of pupils from Year 6 showed an inspector their work in mathematics and their writing. They read out passages that they thought reflected their best work. They talked about the books they liked to read and discussed what helped them to learn generally and what they found difficult.
- The inspection team looked closely at the provision for pupils who have dual registration with other educational providers for specific and complex special educational needs. The pupils were at their other schools during the inspection.
- The inspectors held meetings with two groups of pupils, including school council members. They also held meetings with the headteacher, the Early Years Foundation Stage team, other staff, the senior leadership team and a representative from the local authority. They held three meetings with governors, including the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body.
- The inspection team looked at a range of documentation supplied by the school. This included the Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools (SIAS) report, information relating to safeguarding, data on pupils' progress and attainment, and the school's evaluations of teaching.
- The inspection took account of 80 parents' views in the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).

## Inspection team

Lesley Clark, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Harrison

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding in this school for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is low.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion of pupils supported through school action plus.
- An above average proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Forty per cent of this group of pupils have dual registration with other educational providers to meet their special educational needs.
- The school has had several staffing changes within the last three years. Two teachers took up acting leadership roles in February 2012, as deputy headteacher and senior teacher leading special educational needs.
- The school was inspected in December 2012 as part of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools (SIAS).
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- In order to make teaching outstanding, teachers should consistently:
  - increase the proportion of time in lessons for pupils to learn actively, independently and through enquiry
  - use lesson time more effectively so that pupils access appropriate tasks as soon as they are ready to do so
  - make sure that teaching methods make more-able pupils think hard for themselves and that tasks are at the right level of difficulty to always challenge them to make the best possible progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a really good start.
- Reception children make rapid progress in all areas of learning because the indoor and outdoor learning environments offer them multiple opportunities to learn through investigation and discovery.
- For example, children confidently created a large, partially imaginary vehicle which changed function as their game developed. They also worked out how many plastic pennies they needed to 'buy' scoopfuls of lentils priced at 2p a scoop.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium make good progress. In the 2012 national tests at the end of Year 6, they did as well as pupils nationally who are not known to be eligible for free school meals. This is because the school targets funds wisely to give them individual tuition and a homework club to help them to fill any gaps in their learning. However, they did not do quite as well as the other pupils in this school although the attainment gap is closing.
- Pupils who are supported through school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs make excellent progress. This is because they are given extra tuition in small groups to help them to learn basic skills. Most reach nationally expected levels by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils who have dual registration make excellent progress too. Their records of achievement confirm their outstanding achievement.
- Pupils read fluently and expressively. Younger pupils have a good grasp of how letters and sounds link together and so they can sound out unfamiliar words confidently. By Year 6, pupils readily discuss favourite books and authors. They say that the 'reading journals' help them to keep track of what they read and to jot down words for future use in their writing.
- Attainment in writing is above average. Standards have risen sharply as a result of the school's recent focus on writing. However, the quality and quantity of pupils' writing varies from class to class depending on the amount of time in lessons that pupils have to work independently.
- It is a similar picture in mathematics. Intensive teaching in Year 6 ensures that the majority of pupils reach high standards but progress is uneven from year to year. In some lessons the work does not require more-able pupils to think hard and so their progress slows.
- Overall, therefore, pupils achieve well. The proportion of pupils exceeding expected progress compares favourably with national figures in relation to pupils' different starting points. The school clearly promotes equality of opportunity successfully and tackles discrimination well.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching is good with a few instances of outstanding practice. A few lessons vary in quality between good and requiring improvement.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage gives children ample time to learn through exploration and discovery. This helps them to learn at a fast rate and to concentrate well for short periods of time on specific learning points.
- Most teachers have good subject knowledge. As a result, their teaching is confident and their explanations are clear.
- In good lessons, teachers use methods such as paired discussions to encourage pupils to share ideas. They use up-to-date technology well to make teaching points clear. This means that pupils know exactly what they are expected to achieve in the lesson.
- Good-humoured, trusting relationships between staff and pupils mean that pupils happily ask for help when they need it. Teachers are very willing to coach them through difficulties but sometimes this is at the expense of helping pupils to work things out for themselves.

- In some lessons, teachers tend to over-direct pupils' learning or talk for too long. When this happens, pupils have very little time to think hard or to complete tasks independently.
- Tasks are sometimes not at the right level of difficulty to challenge different groups of pupils, especially the more able. Consequently, pupils' progress slows.
- Pupils' rates of progress soar when they are given sufficient time to learn actively and independently, as when Year 6 pupils collaborated to concoct eye-witness statements, pooling their ideas and challenging each other's views.
- In the best lessons, teachers use assessments of what pupils know and can do to help them to shape the way they teach. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils started tasks at different points since not all of them needed to listen to the introduction or intermediate explanations. This meant that more-able pupils did not waste any learning time and so they made rapid progress.
- An outstanding aspect of teaching is the skilled support that teaching assistants give disabled and special educational needs pupils. A steady, step-by-step approach that challenges pupils to think and remember, turns them into confident learners who are keen to practise new skills. They make excellent progress as a result.
- Marking is effective in most classes and first rate in Year 6. It is closely linked to pupils' individual targets and often gives pupils good advice as to how to improve their writing.

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

- Pupils clearly thoroughly enjoy school. They are proud of being a church school and recite the school creed and prayers with conviction, explaining why these are important. Older pupils say, 'We enjoy our time in school and look forward to coming each day.'
- Pupils are proud of their links with the local church and the impact it has on their lives. Year 6 pupils explained, 'Most of us go to youth club there because it's fun.'
- The rich curriculum, with many educational visits, gives all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, a broad cultural perspective and stimulates their curiosity and keenness to learn.
- Pupils feel very safe. They are confident that there is no bullying. They have a mature understanding of the different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. Year 2 pupils, for instance, are fully aware of internet safety rules because these are well taught.
- The school's records confirm pupils' views that there is no racism or name-calling. Pupils explained, 'We have just finished a topic which involved teaching us about not calling people names. We definitely don't call people gay.'
- The school ensures that pupils who attend other educational institutions for part of the week are equally safe.
- Pupils are very polite, considerate and helpful. They respect each other. Older pupils run a 'peace patrol' which helps younger pupils to play together amicably. The school council has real responsibility, including managing a budget.
- Parents fully agree that their children are happy and safe in school. Pupils' excellent conduct, behaviour and manners are commended frequently by visitors.
- The climate for learning is exceptionally positive. Pupils' attitudes are exemplary.
- Attendance rates have improved over the past three years, reflecting pupils' keenness to come to school. The school has notable success at securing high attendance rates for pupils whose attendance has been a cause for concern prior to their joining this school.

## The leadership and management are outstanding

- Senior leaders and the governing body have strong aspirations for this school to be the best it can be. The school's motto, 'Equality and Excellence', clearly underlies every decision they take. Their exceptional effectiveness as leaders of a church school is recognised in the recent SIAS report. The local authority gives basic support to this good school.
- The headteacher has a strong understanding of the relative weaknesses of this school. Self-evaluation is uncompromisingly honest, explaining precisely why the school does not yet judge itself to be outstanding, despite its undoubted strengths and sustained good performance.
- Much has changed in a short time with the impetus of a new leadership team. Their impact is seen in much-improved attainment in writing and excellent outcomes for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. This is the result of a radical change to the nature of the provision for pupils with complex and individual learning needs. Initiatives such as 'writer of the month', numerous opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects and staff meetings to promote different teaching methods are proving to be very effective.
- The evaluation of teaching quality is rigorous and accurate. The proportion of good and better teaching is improving each term because the school is relentless in its drive to provide the best learning opportunities for all groups of pupils.
- This is underpinned by very effective and extremely well-evidenced performance management. Teachers who underperform do not pass the pay threshold until their teaching is shown to be effective at securing good rates of progress for the pupils they teach. Equally, successful teachers are rewarded. Regular meetings to check pupils' progress ensure that teachers are fully accountable.
- Newly qualified and inexperienced teachers are given excellent advice as to how to improve their practice. Similarly, experienced staff are encouraged to undertake professional development to enhance potential leadership and management skills.
- The curriculum is exceptionally good. It provides positive learning experiences that foster pupils' outstanding behaviour and their rich spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school has highly successful ways of involving parents in their children's learning, using a virtual learning environment as well as making time available each day for parents to talk to teachers should they have any concerns.
- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is a strength. Governors are well informed and manage resources extremely well to support school initiatives. They deploy their individual expertise effectively. Governors have excellent understanding of comparative data in relation to pupils' achievement. They use the information to excellent effect to support and challenge the school further. Governors have a good understanding of teaching quality. They know how any underperformance is tackled and ask the right sort of questions to support performance management. Governors have a high profile in school and contribute fully to the school's self-evaluation. They ensure that the pupil premium money is used to good effect. The support is tailored closely to pupils' individual needs. As a result, gaps are closing rapidly. Governors are rigorous in checking and approving policies and ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are highly effective. This ensures that staff and pupils are safe and fully supported.

## 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>	121474
<b>Local authority</b>	York
<b>Inspection number</b>	403463

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	171
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Megan Rule
<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Knowles
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 November 2007
<b>Telephone number</b>	01904 625240
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