

St Paul's Community Primary and Nursery School, Spalding

Queen's Road, Spalding, PE11 2JQ

Inspection dates

14–15 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils do not always make the progress that they should in reading, writing and mathematics. This is particularly the case in Key Stage 1.
- In lessons, teachers do not always make the best use of time. The pace of learning is not always brisk and the more-able pupils are not given opportunities to work independently soon enough in some lessons.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve, and pupils do not always know what they are expected to learn during lessons.
- Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to ask pupils to explain their reasoning, especially in number work.
- Leaders do not take into account the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement over time. This results in self-evaluation which is not absolutely accurate.
- Systems and procedures for checking teaching quality and for making improvements are relatively new and are not yet embedded and sustained in practice, so cannot yet be fully evaluated.
- Leaders do not respond quickly enough to the findings from school self-evaluation to ensure that all groups of pupils make the best possible progress.
- The governing body has not held leaders fully to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils behave well, have good manners and feel safe in school.
- Good care, guidance and support are provided for vulnerable pupils, including those who are at an early stage of speaking English.
- Leaders and governors are committed to giving pupils a good education and have the capacity to make this happen.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 17 lessons taught by 12 teachers and/or teaching assistants. Five of these lessons were observed together with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Samples of pupils' work in English and mathematics were analysed from Years 2, 4 and 6. An inspector listened to Year 2 pupils reading.
- Meetings and discussions were held with school staff, a group of pupils, members of the governing body and a school improvement officer from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 18 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View), parents' responses to the school's own recent survey and 17 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the work in pupils' books; monitoring records; the school's own data on pupils' progress; minutes of governing body meetings; and policies, procedures and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

David Herd, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jonathan Sutcliffe

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Pauls is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school during the school year is above average.
- Around half of the school's population is White British. A larger-than-average proportion of pupils come from Eastern Europe. Many new arrivals have little or no experience of English when they join the school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is well-above average. This provides extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those that are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average and the proportion of these pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school does not use alternative provision offsite.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, particularly in Key Stage 1, so that it is good or better, and improve pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by making sure that teachers:
 - improve the pace of lessons, so that learning is brisk and that more-able pupils tackle activities for themselves earlier in lessons
 - clearly explain and demonstrate what pupils are going to learn and what is expected of them during and by the end of lessons
 - have higher expectations of what pupils should achieve in lessons and over time
 - when solving number problems, encourage pupils to explain more often the reasons for their answers so that they and other pupils can learn from each other.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance so that they have a greater impact on improving teaching and pupils' achievement, by:
 - improving the rigour of monitoring and evaluation to bring about further improvements to teaching and learning, and also to the accuracy of school self-evaluation
 - responding more rapidly to findings from monitoring and evaluation activities to ensure that all groups of pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium, make the best possible progress
 - ensuring the governing body holds the school to account more rigorously for the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6 is below average. Pupils achieved a reasonable rate of progress in the 2011–2012 year, but they have struggled to do even as well as this in previous years. Consequently, their achievement requires improvement.
- Most pupils learning to speak English as an additional language make the progress they should by the end of Year 6. Many of these pupils can only speak a few words of English when they join the school, and often find writing the language very difficult at first. Catch-up programmes run by the school staff help them to reduce, but not close, the gap between their attainment and that of their White British classmates.
- Children start in the Nursery with skills that are well below those typical for their age, especially in communication and language. They make good progress in Nursery and Reception to reach broadly average levels by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, with the exception of their personal, social and emotional development. The provision of activities in class and the use of the outdoor area are much improved from the previous inspection.
- Across Key Stages 1 and 2, nearly all pupils make reasonable, but not good, progress. Pupils' attainment, at the end of Year 6, meets the government's current floor standards. Nevertheless, the proportion of pupils who attain the higher Level 5 on leaving the school is well-below average.
- Pupils are making better progress in Key Stage 2 than they have in recent years, especially in mathematics. In 2012, most Year 6 pupils made the progress they should. This was a considerable improvement on previous years, but it is too early to be certain the better performance will be maintained. Currently, not enough pupils make consistently good progress across the school in English and mathematics.
- Although pupils' reading requires improvement, progress is reasonable and, sometimes, good for those who speak English as an additional language. However, in their writing, pupils do not always apply their knowledge of grammar and punctuation – for example, they forget to use capital letters and full stops correctly. In mathematics, they often find solving problems difficult.
- The progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is too variable in writing and mathematics. In some year groups, these pupils make good progress in writing but not in mathematics. In other year groups, these pupils make good progress in reading, but not in other skills. However, pupils eligible for the pupil premium do not achieve less well than others. For example, based on their average points scores in the national tests in 2012, Year 6 pupils eligible for free school meals attained at least as well as others in the school, and as well as similar pupils nationally.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. Most of these pupils make good progress because of the support provided for them inside the classroom. Good support is also provided individually or in small groups to help these pupils to do well, especially in improving their reading and remembering important topics in mathematics.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Over time, teaching has not been good enough to help pupils achieve well. Although teaching is improving, its impact on pupils' learning is not sufficiently consistently good to bring about good progress for all groups of pupils.
- Teachers do not always plan lessons effectively to make sure that pupils learn at a fast pace. For example, in some lessons, pupils spend too much time investigating rhyming words and are not moved on to other work quickly enough. Occasionally, teachers' planning of learning delays more-able pupils from getting on with their own work directly, and so their progress slows down.
- Teachers do not always explain clearly enough what pupils are going to learn in the lesson. Sometimes, teachers miss opportunities to demonstrate what they want the pupils to do. For example, they do not show pupils how written work could be best presented.
- Teachers do not always make work demanding enough for the full range of pupils' abilities. Sometimes the work given to more-able pupils is too easy. For instance, work in finding fractions of numbers and amounts of money were too easy for some of the pupils, but no alternative task was provided.
- The teaching of early reading skills varies too much. In the Nursery and the Reception class, early reading skills are taught well. Tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers systematically ensure that pupils learn the sounds that letters make. This is not the case in Year 1, where the meanings of difficult words are not explained well enough for the pupils to take their reading skills forward.
- The teaching of mathematics is uneven. While it has improved recently to bring about improved rates of progress in Key Stage 2, teachers do not always explain their answers to pupils' questions clearly enough. When solving mathematical problems, pupils are not always given the opportunity to explain how they arrived at their solution. In these situations, teachers do not help pupils clear up any misunderstandings or involve others in explaining how a solution has been arrived at to make learning more effective.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well taught. Teachers and teaching assistants take time to consider the needs of each individual pupil and design programmes to match their ability levels. For example, teaching assistants provide helpful models of words for pupils to learn. Teachers make learning fun for pupils who are learning early mathematics skills so they learn number bonds and doubles effectively.
- The marking of pupils' work is mostly good. Teachers note what pupils have done well and tell them what they need to improve. In Key Stage 2, pupils respond well to teachers' marking by editing their work or rewriting sentences and paragraphs. This practice is not so well developed in Key Stage 1.
- Teachers make good use of the school's target-setting system, so that pupils know what they are aiming for.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- A minority of younger pupils sometimes lose concentration, even when they are supervised by an adult, and their behaviour deteriorates. However, behaviour is generally good and pupils become increasingly keen to learn as they go through the school.

- Nursery and Reception children have good relationships with the adults that work with them. Adults provide clear guidelines on what is expected regarding behaviour and this leads to a calm learning environment where the children make good progress.
- As pupils get older, their behaviour improves. They show interest in their learning when it is explained well and this helps them make better progress. By the time they reach Year 6, they show respect for the views of others and demonstrate that they know how to behave well. Pupils are friendly and have good manners.
- In the playground, pupils from a range of ages play and get on well together. They are supported by adults, who instigate games to play. Many other activities are available, which occupy pupils, give them an interest and, often, useful exercise.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well in some lessons. For instance, older pupils looked carefully at a text discussing a moral issue, and were helped to arrive at a balanced view. In other lessons, pupils discuss, for example, what is required to make a test fair in science.
- Pupils are supported well in choosing appropriate behaviour by the behaviour mentor and other teachers and teaching assistants. Adults work hard in promoting good behaviour, using a consistent system of green, amber and red cards and letters that bring positive results.
- Parents are mostly confident that their children are safe in school. Pupils say they understand different forms of bullying, including use of mobile phones and the internet, and think that they are safe in school. They are confident that if there are any incidents, they know that they will be dealt with effectively by school staff.
- The school has worked hard to improve pupils' attendance steadily over recent years. Most pupils now attend regularly.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The headteacher and senior leaders check and evaluate the school's performance responsibly. However, they have not taken into account the past performance of the school sufficiently in coming to their judgements on how well it is doing, so school self-evaluation is not completely accurate.
- Planning for school improvement is correctly focused on improving the quality of teaching. However, there is insufficient detail in the school's plans regarding how exactly the school will provide support and guidance to teachers in order to improve their performance and, consequently, pupils' achievement.
- The school sets out clearly how teachers' performance will be evaluated. However, the targets set for teachers to improve their practice are focused too much on responsibilities beyond the classroom rather than on how teaching should raise achievement.
- Pupils' learning from a good range of subjects taught is well planned, and provides them with the potential for interesting lessons. The school provides a range of clubs and activities including

artistic, sporting and musical experiences. These add to pupils' enjoyment of school and develop their confidence.

- Pupils' personal development is well promoted. They have opportunities to develop their spiritual awareness in assemblies and in lessons. Pupils know right from wrong and understand the consequences of their actions. They develop good social skills, talking and listening to each other and respecting others' views. However, their awareness of other cultures in this country and beyond is less well developed.
- The school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe meet requirements. Staff have received appropriate safeguarding training and carry out all procedures correctly.
- Relationships with parents and carers are good. Most parents believe that the school looks after their children and keeps them safe. Some parents feel that pupils' behaviour is not well managed and that the school does not deal effectively with bullying. However, although inspectors pursued these concerns, they did not find evidence to support them.
- The school engages effectively with a range of partners and services. Teachers and teaching assistants have benefited from these relationships in building understanding so that pupils' personal and learning needs can be fully met.
- The school has received a good level of support from the local authority which recognises the weaknesses to be tackled. Support has focused on analysis of data on pupils' attainment and progress, joint observations of teaching and looking at pupils' work. The local authority has brokered additional support for senior leaders and has also worked to strengthen governance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governance requires improvement. Governors are determined to improve the school and have the capacity to move it forward. They know what is happening in school and understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. They oversee the budget well and know how the extra funds from the pupil premium are being used. However, they have not followed up well enough in holding the school to account for the progress of this and other groups of pupils. They have relied too much on information provided to them by senior leaders and have not held them fully to account for pupils' achievement. However, governors understand the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and are using pay and promotion more carefully when rewarding teachers, by measuring the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement. The governing body demonstrates thoroughness in ensuring that its statutory duties are met, particularly with regard to health and safety and the safeguarding of children.

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	120423
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	401936

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jo Elsdon
Headteacher	Heather Beeken
Date of previous school inspection	28 January 2010
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