

St Paul's C of E (Aided) Primary School

St Paul's Road West, Dorking, Surrey, RH42HS

Inspection dates 12–13 February 2013

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.

- School leaders have very high expectations. They have secured significant improvements since the last inspection and they maintain very high standards.
- Outstanding teaching enables pupils to make rapid progress in English and mathematics. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well.
- School leaders, staff and governors share a commitment to raising achievement, ensuring that teaching, learning and the curriculum meet the highest standards.
- Parents are well informed and are encouraged to participate in their children's learning which helps pupils to succeed.
- Pupils of different abilities and backgrounds work together successfully, helping each other to learn.
- Pupils' progress in reading is exceptionally strong and their language and communication skills are developed very well.
- Behaviour standards are very high. Staff and pupils respect each other and are courteous and polite. Pupils manage their own behaviour well and they work and play together harmoniously.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle managers, other staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority.
- A wide range of documentary evidence was examined, including the school's improvement and development plans, records and policies relating to safeguarding, data on pupils' progress and attainment, the school's reports on the quality of teaching and reviews of the school's performance by governors and the local authority.
- Inspectors observed 19 lessons, three of these jointly with senior staff. Shorter observations took place in lesson times and at break and lunchtime. Groups of pupils met inspectors with their work and talked about the progress which they had made. The work of pupils of a range of ages and abilities was sampled.
- Parents' views were assessed through informal discussions at the start of the school day, the school's own surveys and 122 responses to the on-line Parent View questionnaire
- Pupils' reading was reviewed by listening to pupils read and by observing phonics (letters and the sounds that they represent) sessions and individual reading support given by helpers and teaching assistants.

Inspection team

John Worgan, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Crystal Gail Robertson	Additional Inspector
George Long	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families, is low.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is below average, as is the proportion of pupils at school action plus and with statements of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not use alternative provision for its pupils off site.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the standard of boys' writing by:
 - providing exciting and appealing topics and stimulus material which will encourage them to write extended pieces of work of high quality
 - encouraging them to write imaginatively, with accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children enter the school with above-average levels of skill and knowledge. As a result of outstanding teaching, they make rapid progress. Pupils achieve well throughout the school and when they leave have reached levels well above the national average. This high standard of achievement has been maintained over a number of years.
- There are no significant differences in the progress of different groups of pupils, reflecting the school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity and ensuring that no pupil is discriminated against. Pupils from different ethnic groups outperform similar pupils in other schools. Boys and girls perform well, exceeding national averages in English and mathematics. The small numbers of pupils who join the school speaking little or no English make rapid progress because of good support, enabling them to develop their language and communication skills and to make progress in line with their abilities.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make exceptionally good progress because of the excellent support which they receive, planned and targeted to meet their needs.
- The average point scores of the small number of pupils eligible for free school meals show that the gap in attainment in English and mathematics between these pupils and others is closing. This is because of effective actions by the school to provide a range of support for learning. Progress data show that extra help is effective in improving progress.
- Pupils' progress in reading is exceptionally strong, thanks to the very effective teaching of phonics, confirmed by the school's very strong performance in the national screening check. Pupils read widely, are enthusiastic about their reading and share their reading experiences with parents.
- Pupils' progress in writing is generally good and inspectors saw examples of exceptional standards of writing by younger pupils. Boys' writing, although above national average standards, is not as strong as girls' and the school is implementing strategies to narrow this gap.
- Standards in mathematics are exceptionally high and are considerably above national averages. Pupils of all abilities are challenged and high-attaining pupils are developing skills well above those expected for their age. Pupils' mathematical skills are used well in other areas of the curriculum.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The quality of teaching has been very high for a sustained period of time. This has resulted in all pupils of different abilities and backgrounds making outstanding progress.
- Teachers' expectations are high and pupils are given opportunities for independent learning, working very successfully on their own, in pairs and in groups. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. Pupils spoke highly of the guidance they receive to help them improve their work.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching is well organised and thorough planning and checking of children's development ensure that activities are matched to their needs; consequently, they make exceptional progress. There is a careful balance of experiences, children's independent learning is encouraged and reading, writing and calculating skills are developed through well-planned activities.
- In Year 1, progress is sustained because transition arrangements are well organised, ensuring that teachers have a clear view of past progress and ensure that pupils progress rapidly from their starting points.
- Pupils of all abilities are encouraged to reach the highest levels of which they are capable. Pupils respond positively to this; as one Year 6 pupil said, 'They are really pushing us to do well in SATs (Standard Assessment Tests) but they give us the help we need.'

- Higher-ability pupils are given work which extends their skills and they said that they appreciate the opportunities which they are given to work independently.
- Teachers mark books regularly and thoroughly. Pupils understand and appreciate the school's colour-coded marking system which identifies errors, strengths and areas for improvement, enabling them to improve their work.
- Pupils speak confidently and listen to each other well. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils spoke confidently in front of the class, greeting each other and asking simple, personal questions in French.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is of high quality. Thorough progress reviews ensure that activities meet their needs; for example, in a mathematics session on angles, pupils were encouraged to move around the room, turning by 90 and 180 degrees. By the end of the lesson, their understanding of the topic was secure.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is polite and considerate; pupils are courteous to each other and to adults. They have excellent attitudes to learning and take a pride in their school.
- Pupils work together well in pairs and groups. Teachers encourage them to listen to, and to learn from, each other and this has a very positive impact on their attitudes and progress.
- Around the school and in the playground, pupils behave sensibly and with consideration. Older pupils take on responsibility willingly and assist staff in supervising the buildings and outside areas.
- The pupils speak highly of the behaviour management system and say that it is fair, although its more serious levels are seldom reached and pupils manage their own behaviour well, so that it is rarely needed in lessons.
- Attendance is consistently high and is carefully monitored to ensure that it remains so.
- Pupils feel that staff listen to their views and take account of them. The school council plays a significant role in ensuring that the school environment is welcoming and stimulating; for example, by requesting and maintaining a fish tank in the reception area.
- Pupils learn about and respect different cultures. There is a strong ethos of tolerance and respect for other faiths and opinions.
- Pupils said that they feel safe in school and are confident of the support of teachers and other adults when they have problems. Parents were particularly complimentary about the headteacher in this respect; as one said, 'She knows every pupil and any problems are dealt with quickly and sensitively.'

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Senior leaders provide exceptional leadership. The leadership team is highly respected by parents, staff and governors. Raising achievement and school improvement are priorities for all staff and this is reflected in pupils' high standards of work and strongly positive attitudes
- Leaders and managers have a clear awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses, founded on accurate and detailed data and the monitoring of pupils' work. This leads to effective planning; areas of weakness are identified quickly and steps are taken which lead to improvement. Examples of this include initiatives to promote reading and to improve writing.
- Data on pupil progress are collected regularly and all staff check pupils' progress regularly.
- An excellent training programme, largely planned and delivered within the school, ensures that teaching is of high quality and staff are receptive to ideas. New staff and newly qualified teachers are supported exceptionally well.
- The system of setting targets for teachers is strong and is closely linked to the Teachers' Standards. Staff find the system challenging, yet supportive.
- A broad and balanced curriculum ensures equality of opportunity and allows pupils to develop

their talents and skills. Literacy and numeracy are applied exceptionally well in all subjects. Information and communication technology is a particular strength and older pupils demonstrated impressive skills, including basic programming. Music is strong; inspectors saw the choir perform exceptionally well. There is a wide range of well-supported clubs and activities.

- Spiritual, moral and social development has a high priority; consequently, pupils develop mature, reflective and tolerant attitudes. The school is an integral part of the local community and has a close relationship with the church. Visits and participation in local events enrich pupils' experience and link effectively with the curriculum.
- Communication with parents is excellent with an attractive, regularly-updated website and targeted parent mail informing them about the work of the school. Regular consultation ensures that parents' views are taken into account. A minority of parents said that they would like more information on their children's progress; inspectors were impressed by the quality of written reports, however.
- The local authority has a strong relationship with the school, which it sees as in need of light touch support. The headteacher's expertise has been used by the local authority to support another school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body provides high levels of challenge and support. Governors have a range of relevant skills which are supported by appropriate training. Data are used very effectively to monitor the school's performance against local and national standards. Governors manage resources effectively, including monitoring the allocation and use of the pupil premium, ensuring that funding is used to employ extra staff and to provide experiences for these pupils which effectively close the gap with other pupils. Governors have an excellent understanding of the standards of teaching and monitor carefully the review of pay levels. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities and ensures that all requirements are met in relation to 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	125171
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	403570

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	419
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Brookman
Headteacher	Susan Whittle
Date of previous school inspection	31 October 2007
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