

St Paul's Whitechapel Church of England Primary School

Wellclose Square, London, E1 8HY

Inspection dates

8–9 May 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.

- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Pupils start school needing a lot of support for their learning, but make exceptionally good progress to reach standards which are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage receive very effective help and soon gain confidence and become independent, developing a love and enjoyment for learning.
- Teaching is outstanding and brings out the best in each pupil. Teachers have high expectations and pupils rise to meet them, tackling demanding activities and challenging questions with conviction.
- Pupils from different groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those who receive additional funding, make excellent progress because their needs are quickly understood and skilled support is put in place.
- Pupils' behaviour, attitudes to learning and respect for each other are outstanding. Pupils are enormously proud of their school and play an active part in contributing to the positive atmosphere.
- There is a culture of high aspiration and success for all. Pupils have a rich and stimulating learning experience, inspired by an innovative range of topics and themes which help to motivate them and contribute strongly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leadership is outstanding. School leaders are highly supportive of the vision to continually improve and are powerful role models around the school. Staff support for the headteacher has driven up standards across the school.
- The governing body plays an important and successful role in supporting and challenging the school to help drive improvements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, four jointly with the executive headteacher and head of the school. They also observed support and small-group sessions for pupils at risk of falling behind.
- Inspectors attended two school assemblies and visited the school's breakfast club.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in class and met with two different groups of pupils. They spoke with three school governors and a representative of the local authority. They also spoke to school staff, including senior and subject leaders.
- Inspectors noted the views of 49 parents and carers who responded to the on-line Parent View survey and spoke to parents and carers who were bringing their children to school. They also observed a creative workshop with a poet for a small group of parents and their children.
- Inspectors were present during one of the regular lunchtime reading-partner sessions, where local business people come in to read with pupils.
- The inspection team reviewed the responses to 12 staff questionnaires completed during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's information on pupils' current progress, planning documents, checks carried out by leaders on the school's effectiveness, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Aune Turkson-Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Olson Davis

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Paul's School is a below average size primary school.
- The majority of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding provided for looked after children, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent in the armed forces, is well above average.
- The breakfast club on site is managed by the governing body.
- 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?

- Ensure that where any individual pupils may need additional help or support with their learning, this is always swiftly put into place early on.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils make excellent progress through the school. School information and current work indicate that pupils are on track to continue to improve further in both key stages in 2013, with an increasing number set to achieve Level 6 in reading and writing as well as in mathematics.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve well. Overall, pupils eligible for the pupil premium are edging ahead of their peers in school in reading and writing and are more than a term ahead in mathematics. There are no real attainment gaps because the extra funding is used very effectively to provide the targeted support of qualified teachers and teaching assistants. The in-school counselling service has had a positive impact on pupils' emotional well-being and enabled pupils to be more receptive to learning.
- Pupils' standard of reading has continued to rise consistently over recent years and remains well above average. Less-able pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 show a secure grasp of the principles of reading. Pupils have very positive attitudes and high levels of enthusiasm about their enjoyment of reading. They benefit greatly from having a reading partner in the local business community to read to on a regular basis.
- Writing standards are high, and writing is woven into all class activities, visits and topics studied. Pupils write for a range of purposes with competence and confidence. They re-draft and edit their own work so that they are constantly improving. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used with great effect to source information which stimulates pupils' writing.
- In numeracy, pupils have excellent opportunities to apply their skills and choose their own methods to solve problems. The skill in applying previous learning across a range of topics to build on and further develop understanding contributes well to raising their achievement.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive exceptionally good-quality support and achieve well as a result. Additional funding to provide specialised adult support for smaller groups daily has been highly effective in promoting these pupils' success.
- The achievement of pupils from minority ethnic groups is similar to that of other pupils. Those who speak English as an additional language also make good and better progress because the school identifies their language needs early on and provides suitably tailored support.
- Pupils make the very best progress in those lessons where their needs are identified early on and they have the right support to enable them to be successful. In a small number of instances, this is not the case and, as a result, progress in these lessons is good rather than better.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- School leaders have placed a strong focus on teaching and learning and this is one of the main reasons why the quality of teaching has improved and is now outstanding.
- Teachers set high expectations and the pace of lessons is typically swift, containing a good variety of challenging activities and opportunities for pupils to be involved throughout.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are encouraged to be independent and quickly develop high levels of confidence as their communication skills improve and adults engage their interests with a series of enjoyable, purposeful activities both indoors and outside. Early reading and writing skills develop particularly well and provide an excellent basis for their next steps in learning.
- Literacy, including reading and mathematics, are taught extremely well, so pupils have lots of opportunities to develop their writing and mathematics skills across different subjects. As one pupil said, 'Teachers make learning come alive.' Teaching is enhanced by the effective use of an excellent range of resources, including new computers, interactive whiteboards, and other ICT equipment which provides variety in the ways pupils learn.
- Teaching assistants make a huge contribution to pupils' excellent learning and progress. They know their pupils well and are sensitive to their needs, providing the right balance of support at

the right time. As a result, they help to ensure that all pupils make the very best progress that they can.

- Teachers are very effective in linking activities with pupils' individual targets so that pupils understand exactly what is expected of them and how they can achieve greater success. Pupils understand their targets for each subject, always refer to the learning intention and success criteria when reviewing a piece of work and have the highest motivation to achieve their absolute best.
- Marking across the school is excellent in all lessons and subjects. The very best examples refer to pupils' individual targets and offer high quality, helpful feedback to ensure that pupils reach the highest levels in their work. Teachers' marking offers a careful balance between praise and suggesting how to improve. Pupils read and respond to comments on a daily basis during the morning book check session which helps them to continue to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. They manage their own behaviour very well and play a very active part in maintaining the positive atmosphere in their school.
- The parents, carers, and staff agree that pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is excellent. Pupils' attendance levels are rising and, with the help of incentives like the highly contested attendance cup, are on track to reach above average levels. The breakfast club is extremely popular and has also had a positive impact on attendance.
- School councillors represent pupils well and act as positive role models for others in the school. The head boy and girl, supported by a host of willing prefects, fulfil daily duties with enthusiasm and a sense of maturity.
- Bullying is rare and dealt with effectively when it occurs. Pupils understand risk, particularly as they are involved in a high number of visits and know how to stay safe outside school. They are highly aware of different types of bullying and how to keep themselves safe, especially on the internet. There are few racist incidents, and discrimination in any form is not tolerated.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and all speak positively about how much they enjoy and value being a part of it. From the very youngest, pupils make their own choice daily to put on the 'playbudz' t-shirts and go out to make sure that everyone has somebody to play with.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. If they have any concerns, they say that there are several adults who they can turn to for help. The 'place 2 be' in school is a popular choice when pupils have specific worries.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- School leaders have been highly successful in continuing to improve the school, so that all aspects of its work are now outstanding. School leaders work together with a clear vision and commitment to continuous improvement. Their high expectations are reflected throughout the school.
- Leadership roles have evolved and strengthened and new roles created to retain talented teachers and drive key improvements identified in the school's development plan. Staff responses were resoundingly positive and praising of the leadership team.
- The school reviews all aspects of its work thoroughly and acts quickly to address any gaps so that the pace of improvements is not slowed. School development plans are realistic and sharply focused. Plans to raise standards are linked to close checks on the quality of teaching, learning and progress and these are shared by all leaders at all levels in the school. Excellent staff training and the highly effective retention of talented newly qualified teaching staff in recent years have led to marked improvements across the school.
- Leaders make sure that teachers' pay and performance link directly to whole-school priorities

and pupils' progress. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching so that all is now consistently good and increasingly outstanding.

- Equal opportunities are rigorously promoted and no pupil is denied access to anything the school has to offer.
- The local authority and the diocese have supported the school very well. In recognition of the school's 'high performance' the support has been at a light touch level.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are highly skilled and their work with school leaders is exceptional and has been integral in the drive to become an outstanding school. They have an excellent understanding of information on pupils' progress, and use the very latest available to make comparisons with other schools. Governors are committed to enhancing their own skills and building strong business partnerships for the school. They have deliberately recruited new members with this in mind. This expertise has been used to develop reading partnerships and been an important factor in raising pupils' aspirations. They make regular visits to check directly on key areas of the school's work and also ensure that financial resources are efficiently managed, including pupil premium funding and how this impacts on pupils' achievement. Governors see that targets to improve the performance of staff are reviewed carefully and that teachers' pay is linked to how well pupils are doing. They check that the popular breakfast club is well run and that safeguarding meets 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

Unique reference number	100959
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	402839

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	228
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Graham
Executive Headteacher	Terry Bennett
Head of school	Darren Rubin
Deputy Headteacher	Sarah Meares
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2008
Telephone number	0207 4806581
Fax number	0207 7023426
Email address	deputy@st-pauls.towerhamlets.sch.uk

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