

# St Paul's CofE Primary School

Waterworks Road, Ryhope, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, SR2 0LW

**Inspection dates** 22–23 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good. From their starting points, they make good progress overall throughout their time in school. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is above average in English and in mathematics.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers plan interesting lessons which fill the pupils with enthusiasm and make them want to learn.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils say they feel safe and understand how to keep themselves safe. They are polite and courteous, and enjoy the caring environment created by the school.
- The determined leadership of the headteacher, supported by effective leaders at other levels, have secured real improvements in a relatively short space of time. For example, the quality of teaching, the achievement of pupils and the behaviour and safety of the pupils have all improved.
- The governors are very supportive and effective in holding the school to account. They share the same determination as the school to continue to improve the school even further.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The teaching of mathematics is not as strong as it is in other subjects because pupils are not given enough opportunities to use their skills to solve real-life problems and teachers do not use a wide enough range of resources to help pupils understand mathematical ideas.
- Sometimes, teachers do not plan lessons that meet the needs of all pupils.
- Pupils are not always given time to make the improvements suggested by teachers when they mark pupils' work.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher. They listened to pupils read in Years 2 and 6.
- Inspectors took account of 23 responses to the Ofsted on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and to 24 responses to the questionnaire completed by the staff.
- They held a meeting with pupils in Year 6 and talked informally with pupils at breaktime and lunchtimes. Inspectors talked to four members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. They also held meetings with different leaders within the school including the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the special educational needs coordinator and the leaders of literacy and numeracy.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at a range of documentation including internal and external information relating to pupils' progress, their workbooks, school improvement planning and the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance. They also considered reports written by the local authority, documents relating to the management of teachers' performance, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding and child protection documents.

## Inspection team

Peter Eeva, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lesley Richardson

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after.
- The school exceeds the current government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has been through a period of significant change including a change of leadership at senior level and other staffing changes.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - consistently planning lessons that meet the needs of all pupils
  - providing pupils with suggestions for how to improve their work and giving them opportunities to make the improvements.
- Raise attainment in mathematics further by:
  - providing pupils with a greater range of opportunities to use their mathematical skills to solve real-life problems
  - using a wider range of resources to help develop pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- From low starting points when they join the school, pupils typically make good progress overall during their time in school.
- Children get off to a very good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They settle into school quickly and are known and cared for as individuals. As a result, they reach good standards in reading and writing with many writing simple sentences using correct spelling and grammar.
- In Key Stage 1, a new and well thought out curriculum ensures that pupils understand the basics of times tables and can calculate with increasing accuracy but the range of resources used by teachers to help pupils understand mathematical ideas is too limited. Progress in reading is impressive and pupils develop as confident readers and they make similar progress as they develop a love of writing.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their skills in reading and writing and reach above-average standards in reading and in writing by the end of Year 6. There are good opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to write at length and for a variety of audiences and purposes. In mathematics, pupils now make better progress and achieve standards that are also above average. However, they do not have enough opportunities to apply their developing mathematical skills to solve real-life problems.
- In 2012, there was a gap in attainment in mathematics of approximately one year between those pupils who were known to be supported by the pupil premium and those who were not. The pupil premium is used to good effect and this gap has been halved as a result of the increasingly effective teaching of mathematics and the school is aiming to narrow the gap still further or eliminate it completely. There is no gap in attainment in English.
- Teachers typically have high expectations and this is particularly true of the most-able pupils who are challenged to reach the highest levels and who make good progress and reach standards that are above average.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. They make good progress in all subjects because teachers and teaching assistants know their needs well and have a good understanding of how to meet these needs in lessons and in one-to-one and small-group sessions.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved across the school and this is reflected in the improved progress pupils are making in all subjects.
- Some teaching is outstanding. In one lesson, pupils were completely absorbed in a variety of very creative activities to explore a character's point of view in order to be able to improve their own writing.
- Teachers plan interesting lessons based on topics which excite the pupils and make them want to learn. Pupils have frequent opportunities to write at length and for a range of purposes about the topics they are studying.
- In general, lessons are planned well but, on occasions, information about pupils' progress is not used well enough to plan learning that accurately matches different abilities.
- Teachers typically have very high expectations of their pupils and, as a result, pupils always try to do their very best.
- Teachers ask questions that make pupils think hard about their answers and they are encouraged to provide answers in full sentences which develop their speaking and reasoning skills well.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well and have a clear understanding of the needs of different groups of pupils including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs. They

provide effective support to help these children achieve well.

- Good relationships between pupils and adults are typical. Classrooms have a calm and caring atmosphere that has been carefully created by the adults and so learning proceeds without interruption.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and often acknowledge where learning has been successful. In the best feedback, teachers suggest where improvement could be made. This does not always happen nor do pupils have regular opportunities to make the improvements suggested.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved as a result of the introduction of an effective whole school curriculum. However, teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to use their mathematical skills to tackle and solve real-life mathematical problems. The range of resources used to help pupils to understand abstract mathematical ideas is limited and this makes it difficult for some pupils to develop their understanding as quickly as they might.

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

- The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is good and the school's records confirm this. Pupils understand the link between behaving well and learning effectively. They are keen and eager to learn and this has had a positive effect on their achievement.
- The school has an effective system for managing behaviour which is well understood by all the pupils and this helps learning to proceed without interruption.
- The school provides a wide range of sporting and artistic after-school clubs and activities which are popular with the pupils. It is using some of its primary school sports funding to support these and to make the teaching of physical education more effective and this, together with the sports activities, is having a positive impact on pupils' physical well-being.
- In the playground, pupils play well together and show their caring nature for each other. During one lunch time, for example, an older pupil spontaneously helped a much younger one to cut up his food. The older pupils provide very positive role models to which the younger pupils aspire.
- Pupils are very courteous and polite to adults and to visitors to the school. They are proud to be a member of the school community and find it difficult to think of anything significant they would like to change. As one pupil put it: 'It's pretty much perfect.'
- Pupils feel safe and parents and staff agree. Pupils say there is little, if any, bullying and are confident that it would be dealt with swiftly if any did occur.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe in a wide range of situations in and out of school and when using the internet.
- Attendance is improving as a result of the hard work the school is doing. Parents are alerted as soon as a pupil is absent if the school has not been informed in advance and the school is determined to discourage parents from taking pupils out of school for holidays during term time.

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

- The school is very well led by a highly effective and very determined headteacher who has guided the school through a period of change. She is ably supported by other leaders and by an ambitious and effective governing body.
- The school has a very accurate picture of its strengths and areas which need to be developed and produces clear plans with appropriate actions to tackle these.
- The headteacher and other leaders carry out regular checks on the standard of teaching and learning and have an accurate view of its quality. Where improvements are needed, teachers are able to improve their skills through effective professional development. Improvements in pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics have been the result of the determination of leaders to improve the quality of teaching across the school.
- There are thorough systems in place to check on pupils' progress throughout the school. Where

there are any gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills or understanding, these are identified quickly and action is taken to boost pupils' learning by providing extra support in small groups or individually, in class or out of class.

- The school knows and cares for its pupils as individuals and is successful in removing barriers to learning. As a result, all pupils have an equal opportunity to do well and any gaps in the performance between groups, such as those eligible for support through the pupil premium have disappeared in English and narrowed rapidly in mathematics.
- Arrangements for pay and the promotion of staff are closely linked to staff performance and pupils' progress. Where support is needed to improve performance this is provided to good effect.
- The curriculum has been successfully developed to ensure it meets the needs of the pupils and they appreciate the variety of topics they study and the range of after-school clubs and activities which are very popular.
- The development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is very important to the school and, as a result, pupils' personal development is of a good quality.
- Safeguarding and child protection policies and practice meet current requirements.
- The local authority has provided much appreciated support during a period of significant change, particularly in helping the school to make links with other schools and agencies and especially the diocese.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The school benefits from the support and challenge of an effective and ambitious governing body which is well informed and knows the school well. Governors use the information about the school available to them to ask questions that help to hold the school to account. They bring a range of skills to the governing body but are pro-active in seeking training to become even more skilled. Governors are familiar with the Teachers' Standards and use them to help manage teachers' performance. They oversee the spending of any pupil premium funding and are aware of the positive impact it is having on pupils' achievement. They have also been involved in planning how to spend the primary school sports funding which they believe will make a difference to pupils' physical well-being. However, it is too early to be able to measure the impact of these plans.

## 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>	108836
<b>Local authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	425789

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	219
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Chadwick
<b>Headteacher</b>	Natalie Fountain
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 September 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 553 6281
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