

St Paul's CofE Primary School

Hampton Dene Road, Tupsley, Hereford, HR1 1UX

Inspection dates

19–20 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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.

- High moral and spiritual values and beliefs underpin the school's high achievement and pupils' outstanding personal development.
- Children get off to a flying start in Reception. All groups of pupils make huge strides in their learning throughout the school.
- Pupils' excellent progress in reading and mathematics last year raised standards considerably. A similar rapid improvement in writing this year is leading to much higher attainment in the subject.
- Teachers provide enjoyable activities that are often exciting and make pupils think hard.
- Pupils are highly engaged by activities in lessons. They try hard and want to learn.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are smart, tolerant and kind each other. They feel very safe in school.
- Strong, but consultative leadership by the headteacher helps to develop staff skills. Leaders have greatly improved teaching and hence pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher and his deputy have excellent oversight of pupils' progress and teachers' work.
- Teachers with responsibilities for subjects and areas of the school check the work of colleagues and help them to improve learning in their own and other schools.
- The school reflects well on its practice and there is a strong desire to improve provision.
- There is a rich and stimulating curriculum that promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well.
- A capable and strong governing body has excellent oversight of the work of the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 24 lessons, three of which were seen with the headteacher and his deputy. They also observed other reading activities, assemblies and extra-curricular activities.
- Inspectors talked to two groups of pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2 and spoke to others informally throughout the inspection.
- Pupils' work from each key stage was examined, and pupils from Key Stage 1 were heard reading.
- A total of 73 responses from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were examined. Inspectors also talked to parents in the playground at the beginning and end of the day. Additionally, they examined 23 staff questionnaires.
- Meetings were held with three representatives of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body who is also responsible for safeguarding. The inspectors held a telephone conversation with the Diocesan Director.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and his deputy, other senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, the learning mentor and the Early Years Foundation Stage manager.
- The inspectors evaluated documentation regarding pupils' current progress and the curriculum, development plans, and procedures and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Kathy Hooper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Laura Henshaw

Additional Inspector

Stuart Ransom

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than the average primary school.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils are White British; a lower-than-average proportion are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is similar to that in most schools.
- The number of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding (pupils known to be entitled to free school meals, looked after by the local authority or from families with a parent in the armed services) is very small.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is lower than average. The proportion who are supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is lower than average.
- There has been a particularly high level of mobility into Key Stage 2 and eight pupils were late entries into last year's Year 6.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- St Pauls C of E Primary School converted to become an academy school in March 2012. It is part of the Diocesan Trust. When its predecessor school, also called St Pauls C of E Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The headteacher also has responsibility for a neighbouring school that Ofsted placed into a category. It has now been judged to be good.
- The headteacher and his staff work in other schools locally and further afield, to share good practice.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all teaching is outstanding by ensuring
 - all teachers tell pupils in their books exactly what they need to do to improve their work
 - pupils act on their advice.
- Improve the leadership and management even further by making clearer, measurable targets for improving pupils' achievement following lesson observations and appraisal interviews.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- The highest achievement is evident throughout the school. Improvements in progress in writing have lifted attainment to the same high levels as in reading and mathematics.
- The most able children in Reception make exceptional progress from starting points that are typical for their age. They are beginning to use punctuation in their clearly formed writing. They count, read and write whole numbers, adding and subtracting single digits without support. Children with special educational needs are extremely well integrated and develop high levels of confidence.
- Key Stage 2 results in reading and mathematics have improved markedly. The proportion of pupils achieving levels above average in tests has increased in reading and mathematics. Although writing has been a weaker aspect of achievement, very well focused staff training and regular, rigorous monitoring have brought about rapid improvement in progress throughout the school.
- Pupils make excellent progress. The writing of the most able is imaginative, precise and lively. They write at length and their spelling and punctuation are accurate. Their handwriting in all their books shows excellent progress; it is clear, neat and fluent. More-able pupils readily respond to fast-paced problem solving in mathematics and confidently manipulate numbers in their heads. Although the attainment of those pupils who joined the school during Key Stage 2 was below that of their classmates, they made rapid progress by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils are curious, eager to learn and relish the challenges presented by their teachers. While whole school monitoring of individual pupils' progress shows very little difference in the achievement of those entitled to pupil premium, there are too few in each year group to make a clear judgement of their attainment compared to that of their classmates.
- All groups of pupils achieve extremely well. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to that of their peers because they are given extra help by teachers and their assistants and their progress is closely checked. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language make outstanding progress because they are well integrated and supported.
- Pupils achieve extremely well in physical education and many sporting activities such as cricket, boys' and girls' football, and swimming. Standards in physical education lessons have improved as a result of teachers' increased competence through further training.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Determined leadership and rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress and teachers' work have led to outstanding teaching. The school's support for a neighbouring school has afforded excellent opportunities to reflect on practice. As a result, teaching in both schools has improved and become more consistent.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage rapidly learn to make good choices within self-chosen activities and work collaboratively, for example when playing number games on the interactive whiteboard. Teachers' skilful direction makes them enthusiastic about completing activities such as 'doing their sums' or writing a diary of the growth of their beans.

- All pupils make at least good progress. There is a real buzz of learning because pupils are excited by activities that make them think hard. Teachers give pupils very helpful prompts that ensure that they know what to do when they get stuck. Teachers question very well and they check pupils' progress throughout the lesson. They skilfully extend, reinforce pupils' learning. They amend their planning when pupils make sudden leaps in understanding or need more time to practice.
- Teachers make sure that older pupils understand just why they are doing particular tasks. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils worked out the floor space for the Edgar Street Grid to find out how much the flooring would cost. They used their knowledge of working out the area of shapes, such as triangles, to calculate the total cost before submitting their estimates to the mayor.
- Teaching promotes high levels of literacy and numeracy. Teachers successfully encourage pupils to make wonderful use of description to bring their writing alive. They ensure that pupils use their excellent understanding of grammar and punctuation to write very interesting accounts, as well as clear, factual reports. Older pupils read widely and many have a range of books on the go at the same time.
- Teaching assistants and other adults in the classroom support the learning of pupils extremely well. They make sure that all pupils are very well involved in all activities. They have very good understanding of the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, which they draw on to support and challenge these pupils, so they make excellent progress. They are knowledgeable, question pupils skilfully and assess their learning in lessons so they can help them all to make rapid progress.
- Teachers mark pupils' books promptly and extremely carefully. They acknowledge pupils' strengths and explain the next steps they need to take to make their work better. Pupils generally address the teachers' comments conscientiously and improve their work. On occasions, where teachers have suggested particularly challenging work for the most able, this is not always completed.
- Wide use of peer and self-assessments helps reinforce learning. Pupils demonstrate excellent sensitivity while reflecting on what they have learned.
- Parents' concern about the usefulness of homework has led to a greater emphasis on project work. Details are posted on the website to inform parents so that they can support their children. As a result, homework makes a great contribution to pupils' achievement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. This reflects the school's strong emphasis on spiritual and moral values. Pupils present themselves very well in their uniform and dress appropriately for physical activities. They try hard in lessons and their books are beautifully presented. They treat each other with impressive respectful and courtesy. The excellent example set by staff encourages pupils to interact with each other tolerantly and fairly, especially younger and less able classmates.
- The school's high expectations regarding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are reflected at all levels throughout the school. Daily collective worship transmits strong moral messages regarding right and wrong as well as promoting spirituality. Pupils understand and support the school's system of rewards and sanctions. There are no exclusions and pupils say

that bullying is rare and immediately addressed.

- The school reflects deeply on its practice at all levels. This is seen in lessons where pupils are encouraged to assess their work and that of others in order to improve it. Assemblies encourage self-reflection, for example, on 'humility'. The introduction of organised games at lunchtime as a consequence of the extra funding for sports has led to a huge drop in incidents.
- Attendance is very high because pupils enjoy school. Absences are immediately followed up. The learning support manager keeps a very close eye on pupils' social and emotional needs, especially those whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. A lunchtime club for those who would prefer to be inside is used very well to provide a space for pupils who are worried to discuss their concerns. It also helps those having difficulty in controlling their behaviour to learn alternative ways of dealing with their strong feelings.
- Pupils learn to be confident, but responsible in preparation for becoming good citizens. They are encouraged to resolve their own issues before approaching adults for help. There is an active school council and some pupils support the reading of younger pupils. They are included in major aspects of decision-making, for example, they contributed to a whole school debate about how the school could become an outstanding one.
- The school buildings are treated with respect and there is no litter. Displays are informative, lively and colourful reflecting all the interesting activities that take place.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils, staff and parents confirm that the school keeps pupils safe. Older pupils, especially, understand how to keep themselves safe, for example when using computers, and they look out for others. Pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable are very well supported and pupils' social and emotional needs are very sensitively addressed.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy. They explain clearly what should be in their lunchbox.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher provides a clear vision based on the highest achievement for all pupils' academic and personal development. He is reflective and has a rigorous but supportive approach to the development of all staff. There are close links with the Diocese through the church and links with other schools. Decisions regarding improvements are well informed by the evaluation of current practice within St Paul's and other schools.
- Teachers in charge of subjects and areas of the school are well-informed and actively check the work of colleagues and support their development. The team includes experienced moderators for Key Stages 1 and 2. As a result, assessments are rigorous and accurate.
- The senior management team has excellent oversight of each pupil's progress. They observe lessons and carry out appraisals in relation to the professional standards for teaching. The targets they set following observations and appraisals are often too general to indicate exactly how teachers might better promote the learning of those pupils whose progress is not as good as the rest of the class.
- Excellent partnerships have benefitted both staff and pupils. The experience of teachers with responsibilities for subjects and areas of the school has been extended through their support for

a neighbouring school. As a result, that school has been improved from a category to 'good' within 10 months. The reflection on practice has enabled St Paul's staff to improve their own practice. Middle leaders also share good practice with a large group of other schools locally. Some disabled pupils and those with special needs work with peers in a local special school and some of their pupils benefit from attending St Paul's at set times through the week.

- Academy status has allowed the school to address issues more promptly rather than waiting for a decision from the local authority. For example, the school employs its own educational welfare officer and speech and language therapist. As a result, it has been able to make rapid improvements. The school is used as a 'hub' for other schools in the Diocesan Trust to develop and improve their practice.
- The curriculum is broad, rich and varied and makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils make use of information and communication technology in many ways, such as using tablets in physical education to capture performance and the use of a virtual learning environment. Pupils learn a modern foreign language and sometime use this in other lessons.
- There are many opportunities for singing and making music together. The school choir, including a four-part staff choir, has a high reputation and the string ensemble has twice won the Elgar Award in the Hereford Performing Arts Festival. Performances in the Three Choirs Festival and in other venues, such as the cathedral, are much appreciated by the local community and further afield.
- Pupils are exposed to art and culture through many trips and visits, including links with other countries, for example, Uganda. An annual art week allows pupils to exhibit their work and give presentations to an audience.
- The school has a very good partnership with its parents. It makes extensive use of technology and some parents find this easier than others. Although the school reports pupils' progress termly to parents, some of them do not feel well informed. The school is considering other ways of improving its communication.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is very skilled and able, and steers the school well. There has been a full review of all the systems and structures as a result of gaining academy status. There is a strong parental presence on the governing body and all its members regularly visit the school. Governors are confident in their role because they are well trained and supported through a buddying system. The school much appreciates the governors' supportive but questioning approach. The vice chair of governors has an excellent overview of the government's statistical analysis of the school's performance and meets frequently with the deputy head to oversee pupil progress for all groups. The pupil premium funding is used very successfully to provide additional support for pupils in danger of falling behind in their learning. Extra funding for sports has been wisely used, for example, to extend the range of after school activities so that they to cater more widely for the varying needs of pupils. The governing body has a very clear picture of the strengths and areas for development among teachers and recognises its duty to reward good performance and address any underperformance.

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	138037
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	431500

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	425
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fiona Nikitik
Headteacher	Andrew Teale
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2009
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