

St Paul's Church of England Primary School

Penrose Street, Walworth, London, SE17 3DT

Inspection dates 8–9 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- This is a good school because school leaders have created a climate in which staff and pupils are expected to do their best. Consequently, all pupils achieve well, both personally and academically.
- School leaders and governors are effective. They have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and what needs to be further improved. Their plans for development are focused specifically on the right priorities.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy learning and they behave well in lessons and around the school. They feel safe in school because they know that adults care for them.
- Teaching over time is good. Pupils enjoy taking part in lessons by replying to teachers' questions and by asking questions of their own. The quality of speaking and listening is good and contributes well to pupils' learning.
- All groups of pupils across the school achieve well. They work hard and make good progress to reach standards that are above average in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Their standards in writing are broadly average, but improving rapidly.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They settle very quickly into the Nursery and progress well. Staff have created warm and stimulating areas in which they work and play happily together.
- School leaders and governors provide good support to teachers to help them to improve their skills. Consequently, teaching is consistently good across the school.
- Previously good teaching has been maintained despite significant changes to the teaching team since the previous inspection. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' achievement is not yet outstanding. Pupils' punctuation and handwriting are not as good as they should be by the end of Year 2.
- Some teachers do not provide work that is hard enough for all pupils.
- Pupils do not always respond to teachers' marking by correcting and improving their work, particularly in writing.
- Some new leaders have not yet developed the skills to check the work of other teachers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils working in 20 lessons or parts of lessons, eight of which were observed jointly with senior leaders. They looked at work in pupils' books and they listened to pupils in Years 2 and 6 reading.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, groups of pupils and four governors. A meeting also took place with a representative from the local authority.
- Among the documents scrutinised were plans showing how the school is to develop further, information regarding pupils' learning and progress, minutes from governors' meetings and curriculum plans. Inspectors also considered documentation showing how the school keeps staff and pupils safe.
- The views of parents were taken into account by speaking informally to parents during the inspection. There were too few responses to the online survey, Parent View, for inspectors to analyse. They took into account 11 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Joy Considine, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Liz Kissane

Additional Inspector

David Wolfson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school and pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- Most pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, with a higher than usual proportion who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is above average. This is additional funding provided by the government to provide support for disadvantaged pupils.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and who have special educational needs supported at school action is lower than average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement is also lower than average.
- There is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been substantial changes to the leadership and the teaching team since the previous inspection. A new headteacher joined the school in September 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement, particularly in writing, by ensuring that:
 - teachers plan work that is hard enough for all pupils
 - pupils respond to teachers' marking by correcting and improving their own work
 - pupils learn to punctuate their writing and develop neat legible handwriting by the end of Year 2.
- Develop the skills of new subject leaders so they can better help and support other teachers to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The new headteacher has built on the strengths of previous leadership by quickly gaining the respect and trust of staff, parents, governors and pupils. She has high expectations for both staff and pupils and, consequently, teaching is good and pupils achieve well. All are ambitious for the school, demonstrating that they can continue to improve. School leaders are fully responsive to the light touch support provided by the local authority.
- School leaders go out of their way to help those pupils who occasionally struggle to manage school life. Additional funding has been used effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as others. Consequently, all pupils have equal opportunities and discrimination on any grounds is not tolerated.
- School leaders check the work of staff by observing lesson and looking at work in pupils' books. They have created a climate in which teachers seek ways to improve that they already do well. There is a carefully planned programme of training so that teachers keep up to date and refresh their skills.
- Some subject leaders are new to their roles and have not yet had the experience of rigorously checking and improving the skills of other teachers. Consequently, some weaker aspects of teaching, such as pupils' lack of response to teachers' marking, have not been addressed.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and rich with experiences that prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. Specialist teaching for some subjects, including music, art and drama, promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, and cultural development effectively.
- Leaders are currently working with local schools to develop a new system of assessment following the removal of National Curriculum levels.
- The school sport funding has been used to train staff to provide high quality physical education lessons to pupils. Specialist coaches have been employed to provide activities such as cricket to increase pupils' participation in competitive sports. Consequently, pupils thoroughly enjoy taking part in physical activities both in school and outside school.
- The school meets all statutory requirements to ensure that staff and pupils are safe at school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors share leaders' ambition and they hold school leaders to account. They use all available information to ensure that the school is doing as well as it should. Governors know that the school performs well in comparison with other schools and that standards in all subjects improved in 2014. They visit school regularly and know that teaching is good, and improving. Governors ensure that systems to manage the performance of staff are robust and that only the best teaching is rewarded. Governors have a good range of professional skills and ensure that they meet all statutory responsibilities. They undertake training to make sure that they are up to date with most recent initiatives. Their systems to manage finances are secure and they take care when considering budget decisions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and they are keen to do well. They enjoy school and this is reflected in their attendance, which has improved and is above average.
- Pupils get on well together regardless of background. They are polite, friendly and courteous and go out of their way to help one another. They show respect towards adults and each other. Pupils say that staff are very caring and they trust them to help in all situations.
- A very small minority of pupils have particular problems that affect the way they behave in school. Staff are well trained to manage pupils' behaviour so they can step in and help before situations escalate. Consequently, the atmosphere around school is very calm and peaceful. Very few lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour.
- The playground provides pupils with a range of activities that stimulate their interest and promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. There are spaces where pupils can sit and chat or just quietly reflect. Active games take place in designated areas and there is a variety of small equipment to occupy pupils at break times.
- School records show very few reported incidents related to behaviour and there have been no recent exclusions. Parents, staff and governors agree that pupils are happy at school and that behaviour is good.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good. The school ensures that all requirements for safeguarding are met and effective policies for safeguarding pupils are followed rigorously by staff.
- The school has a small number of pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable and staff ensure they are provided with appropriate support. They work in close cooperation with external agencies to keep these pupils safe.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school because of the caring approach by staff. They have a good understanding of different forms of bullying, including those relating to computers. They say very little occurs. They know how to keep themselves safe outside school from dangers associated with roads and water.
- The school site is safe, secure and well maintained.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The warm relationships with staff inspire all groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language, to work hard and to progress well. Pupils understand teachers' expectations for their work and behaviour and strive to do their best. They have very positive attitudes to work and this helps lessons to run smoothly.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge that enables them to ask questions to deepen pupils' understanding. Pupils respond eagerly to teachers' questions, sharing their ideas and excitedly discussing their work. High quality speaking and listening are a feature found in most classes, helping all pupils, especially those new to learning English, to progress well.
- Teachers use resources effectively to capture pupils' imaginations and develop their understanding. Year 2 pupils gained a good understanding of how long ears and powerful hind legs keep rabbits safe, through their observations of the class rabbit.
- Scrutiny of pupils' books shows that, over time, teaching is good. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and they identify what pupils have done well and what needs to be improved. However, some pupils do not always respond to these helpful comments by correcting and improving their work, and their progress slows. There are times too when their work is untidy and poorly presented.
- Teachers carefully build on their knowledge of what pupils already know and can do, and so further extend their learning. Occasionally, some pupils have work that is too easy for them because teachers' expectations for what they can do are not high enough. Staff check on pupils' progress in lessons and intervene to help those at risk of falling behind. Consequently all pupils, including those eligible for additional funding, make good progress.
- Teaching assistants offer good support to pupils. They help individual pupils or small groups in class by breaking work down into smaller steps. This particularly helps disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to achieve well.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- All groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards improved at all levels in 2014, particularly at the end of Year 2. School data and scrutiny of pupils' current work indicate that this improving trend is set to continue as all pupils make rapid gains in their learning.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils because they receive targeted support from skilled teaching assistants. They probe pupils with careful questions so that pupils understand what they are expected to learn.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. In the most recent national tests, they were about a term behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. However, they do much better than disadvantaged pupils nationally. The school has successfully helped them to catch up by providing good support that meets their individual needs.
- The most able pupils achieve well and reach standards that are well above average overall. Teachers provide harder work that challenges these pupils and allows them to progress well.
- Pupils enjoy reading. In Year 2, they use letters and sounds (phonics) to read unfamiliar words and they are beginning to use punctuation correctly to read with good expression. By Year 6, pupils read confidently and fluently both for enjoyment and to find information.
- Pupils' write extensively, expressing their ideas through well-chosen vocabulary that adds interest to their

work. However, their handwriting and use of punctuation are not as good as they should be and this slows their progress.

- Pupils enjoy mathematics. They have a secure grasp of basic number skills that they use to solve written problems. By Year 6, most confidently multiply together two and three digit numbers, including decimals.

The early years provision

is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are below those expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. They learn rapidly and make good progress because they are taught well. Consequently, they reach a good level of development by the time they enter Year 1.
- Children are welcomed into a warm and stimulating environment in which they settle quickly. Teachers accurately assess their learning and development and so plan activities and experiences that build on this and extend their learning. Just occasionally, staff do not challenge them by intervening rapidly enough and this slows their progress.
- Children behave well and they feel safe in school. They get on well together and enjoy playing and working with each other. From an early stage they learn to share and to take turns. Consequently, all children behave sensibly and complete their tasks and activities with purpose and enjoyment
- Provision is well led and managed. The new leader has a good understanding of what is working well and what needs to be further improved. He has a clear understanding of early years provision and has harnessed the strengths of all staff to provide a happy, safe environment for 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	100838
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	448202

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	345
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Chadwick
Headteacher	Maggie Brady
Date of previous school inspection	16 March 2010
Telephone number	020 7703 4896
Fax number	020 7277 2873
Email address	office@stpauls.southwark.sch.uk

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