

St Paul's CofE (C) First School

School Lane, Coven, Wolverhampton, WV9 5AD

Inspection dates

23–24 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Leaders, managers and governors have not yet secured consistently good teaching in order to raise achievement across the school. This means that not all pupils reach the levels of which they are capable.
- Staff who lead areas of responsibility, including in the early years, do not regularly check on the quality of teaching, or use all of the information available about pupils' progress, to bring about improvement.
- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement. In some classes, they become unsettled and lose concentration when teaching does not capture their imagination and interest. This limits their progress.
- The quality of teaching is uneven across the school and not enough is good or outstanding.
- Until recently, teachers' assessments were not always accurate due to lack of training. Consequently, work has not always been set at the right level and is not demanding enough for some pupils, especially the most able.
- Teachers' feedback does not always show pupils how to improve their work and teachers do not always check that pupils act on the advice given.
- From their individual starting points, not enough pupils make good progress across the school, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Some children in the early years, especially boys, are not given enough adult support to help them develop their early communication, literacy and numeracy skills. Consequently, not all boys achieve as well as girls in writing or mathematics.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has quickly grasped the most important areas to be tackled. She has introduced changes which are starting to have a marked impact, for example in teaching. As a result, the school and its governance are improving.
- Attention to keeping pupils safe is good. Pupils feel safe and are well cared for. They know how to keep themselves safe and know who to talk to if they have a problem.
- Progress in reading is accelerating. In all year groups, standards in reading are above those expected for pupils' ages.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. The school environment is bright and welcoming. Pupils show high levels of respect to each other and have a good understanding and appreciation of those from other cultures or with different beliefs.
- Pupils enjoy school and this is shown in their above-average attendance.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They saw 13 part lessons, six of which were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with groups of pupils, the headteacher and other members of the leadership team, and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of the 20 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They also spoke informally to parents as they brought their children to school, and considered the views expressed in emails from parents and members of the local community.
- Responses to the inspection questionnaire from 18 staff were received and their views taken into account.
- The inspection team listened to pupils read, talked to them about their learning and reviewed the work in their books.
- The inspectors reviewed a number of documents, including the school's checks on how well it is doing, the school improvement plan, data on pupils' current progress, leaders' reports following lesson observations, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Edgar Hastings

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in six classes and leave to go to middle school at the end of Year 4.
- The early years provision comprises a Nursery and one Reception class. Children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis, mornings only.
- Most pupils are White British and almost all pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium (additional funding provided for disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority) is much smaller than average.
- The school meets current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Before- and after-school care operate on the school site but are managed privately, and are separately inspected.
- A new headteacher was appointed in January 2014. One teacher has left the school and staff illness has caused some disruption to teaching.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching across the school in order to accelerate progress, particularly in writing and mathematics, by making sure that teachers:
 - provide appropriately demanding work for all pupils, at all times, and particularly for the most-able
 - manage behaviour in class more effectively so that pupils maintain their concentration
 - ensure that written and verbal feedback given to pupils about their work leads to prompt improvements.
- Improve provision in the early years for boys so that they achieve as well as girls by:
 - providing more opportunities to develop their social and communication skills in Nursery
 - ensuring that the range of activities encourages boys to write and to practise their mathematical skills.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by:
 - providing training and developing the role of subject and other leaders so that they regularly and rigorously check on the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility
 - ensure that governors ask more searching questions to confirm the accuracy of the information presented to them.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management **require improvement**

- Until recently, leaders, including governors, had not done enough to ensure that achievement and teaching, and pupils' behaviour and safety, were as good as they should be. Since the previous inspection, changes in leadership and staffing absence have caused variations in the rates of progress made by pupils.
- Subject and other leaders carry out some checks of pupils' work but are not fully involved in checking the quality of teaching in their subjects. This limits their knowledge of precisely how well pupils are doing. It also prevents them offering additional training or support to their colleagues, or informing governors about achievement in their areas of responsibility.
- In the past, teachers' assessments have not always been accurate, and this limits the progress that some pupils make because work is sometimes too easy. The new headteacher has introduced more rigorous assessment practice across the school. The school is working to devise a new approach to match the system of assessment to the new National Curriculum. The full impact of these initiatives in securing pupils' good achievement through good teaching is not fully evident.
- The headteacher has set a very clear direction and has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has secured the support of the staff, parents and the governing body. She has improved the rigour and effectiveness of holding staff to account, provided accurate and essential information to governors and instigated training which is leading to improvements in teaching. Systems to check the quality of teaching and track pupils' progress are now robust.
- The new school action plan is sharply focused on the right priorities. Training and support have helped leaders at all levels to improve their effectiveness and to focus directly on these priorities. For example, progress in reading is accelerating as all adults have received training in phonics (letters and the sounds they make); they make links in other lessons so that pupils regularly practise and develop these skills. Systems and processes introduced are having a positive impact on teaching, behaviour, safety and attendance. Performance checks have increased in rigour for teachers and include ambitious targets, regular performance reviews and training. Performance is linked to pay increases.
- The school gives good attention to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A good example is set by making the school environment attractive and welcoming for all. Assemblies promote key values, such as perseverance and respect. The curriculum has been well planned to make sure that pupils have a good appreciation and understanding of other cultures and respect those with different beliefs. For example, children in the early years dressed in Indian costumes to celebrate Diwali. Pupils learn Spanish as a modern foreign language. Activities such as these help pupils to be well-prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders make sure that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and they strongly promote equality of opportunity for all.
- A wide variety of after-school clubs and a limited range of trips and visitors contribute to pupils' enjoyment of school. Some of the sports premium funding has been used effectively to purchase an online activity program and this is helping to improve pupils' coordination skills. The headteacher has initiated plans to use the remaining funding to further develop the outdoor areas.
- Pupil premium funding is used to boost the literacy and numeracy skills of eligible pupils through additional support. The school tracks the impact of this carefully against progress for these individuals.
- The local authority provides good support and has an accurate understanding of how well the school is performing. It has supported the headteacher by observing lessons, helping staff accurately assess the levels at which pupils are working and providing training for staff in their leadership roles.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective and has recently improved. Governors have undertaken a significant amount of training and are now able to provide improved challenge and hold leaders more effectively to account.

They understand the regular and comprehensive information and reports, including data, that are presented by the headteacher, but do not ask enough searching questions to confirm the accuracy of information.

- Governors are informed about the quality of teaching and how action by the headteacher is tackling weaknesses. They set appropriate targets for the headteacher. They check that pay increases for teachers are related to good teaching.
- Governors keep a close eye on finances; they know how the pupil premium and sports funding are spent and what difference they are making.
- Governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively, including for safeguarding the well-being of pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Not all the pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Where teaching does not capture pupils' interest or imagination, pupils, particularly boys, lose concentration and do not complete as much work as they could. This slows their rate of progress.
- Pupils' conduct in and around school is good. Pupils know the sanctions and rewards that the school has put in place. Most pupils are polite, helpful and keen to discuss their work. Behaviour records show that there are very few serious incidents. Those that do occur are dealt with effectively, with referrals and action taken as needed.
- Pupils enjoy school. Attendance has risen in response to the school's efforts to improve it. Current attendance is above average. Parents feel that pupils' behaviour is good and most parents who expressed a view, agreed with the inspection findings that the school deals appropriately with any incidents that occur.
- Children in the early years behave well.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The headteacher has updated policies and renewed safeguarding and child protection training. Leaders make sure that pupils are safe in school. Entry to the premises is well managed and all staff recruited to the school are rigorously checked. Regular checks are made of the site and any problems are reported and rectified quickly.
- Pupils including children in the early years, feel safe at school and almost all parents who expressed their views support this. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and are aware of potential dangers. Pupils know the sanctions and rewards that the school has put in place. Most pupils are polite, helpful and keen to discuss their work.
- Pupils understand about some of the different types of bullying; for example, verbal and physical bullying. They are less aware of what cyber-bullying is. They do not feel that bullying is an issue in their school but say they know who to talk to if they feel upset and that any issues are dealt with swiftly.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, pupils have not been supported well enough to build up their skills year on year and make consistently good progress, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good in all classes. Work is not always set at the right level and it is not suitably demanding for some pupils, especially the most-able. Teaching and the work set is not always engaging enough to hold pupils' attention and interest. As a result, some pupils, particularly boys, lose concentration and so do not achieve as well as they could. On these occasions, therefore, pupils' behaviour is not managed well.

- Teachers' marking is carried out regularly, but is not leading to prompt improvements because pupils are sometimes not sure how to improve. Teachers' checks on the impact of their guidance are not thorough.
- Classrooms are bright and well organised. Displays in classrooms provide useful prompts to help pupils remember key information and celebrate examples of good work.
- In the early years and through the school, teachers have good subject knowledge and use resources well to improve the accuracy and quality of pupils' work. For example, younger pupils use number lines and hundred squares to help them count on or backwards when they are developing their number skills beyond 10 and older pupils have reference books available to help them learn new words.
- Support staff provide valuable help to support learning. They work effectively to support all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs, to make sure that they understand what they need to do, providing additional help if needed.
- Reading is taught well, and standards across the school are higher in this subject than in writing and mathematics. Pupils develop good reading habits and many read for pleasure.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Currently, when children join the school, their skills and knowledge are usually typical for their age. The rate of progress made by pupils is uneven across the school and varies by subject and age.
- By the time children reach the end of Reception, some, especially boys, are not at the level expected for entry into Year 1, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Standards were above average at the end of Year 2 in 2012 and 2013, but in these years, pupils were already above average when they started in Year 1. Standards at the end of Year 4 are in line with those expected for pupils' ages. Only modest gains are made, and pupils do not build as well as they could on their skills and abilities through the school.
- Good support is provided for those who are struggling to read. As a result, pupils' attainment is often higher in reading than other subjects as they move through the school. However, the proportion reaching the required level in the Year 1 screening check has been below the national average recently because staff absence had led to weak teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make). Action now being taken is leading to rapid improvement already evident in class.
- There is a lack of consistency in the progress pupils make across the school in writing and mathematics. The school is aware and has begun initiatives to raise progress and restore standards.
- The more-able pupils are making the same progress as their peers. Teachers do not always set these pupils hard enough work, and teachers do not always move pupils on quickly enough in lessons when they are ready.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also make similar progress to others, from their differing starting points. They receive additional support from staff within the school and also from outside agencies. This helps them to keep up with their classmates.
- The very small number of pupils eligible for the pupil premium make similar progress to their peers. It is not possible to compare their performance with others in their class or with others nationally without potentially identifying individuals.

The early years provision requires improvement

- Children's progress in the early years is uneven and some do not build well on the skills and knowledge they have when they join the school, especially boys. Information provided by the school shows that fewer children reached a good level of development at the end of Reception in 2014 than in the previous year. Boys achieved less well than girls, from similar starting points, especially in literacy and mathematics. In Nursery, social and communication skills, especially in boys, are not well developed.
- Teachers do not always take account of boys' interests or abilities, or encourage them to practise their writing and number skills. Sometimes children spend too long on their own and they do not get enough direct input or teaching from adults to help them develop their early skills; for example, by talking about their work or being part of a group. This is especially true of the boys in Nursery.
- The early years lead has created a nurturing environment where children receive a very warm welcome in the school and soon feel safe and happy. Children learn how to get on together and those new to the school settle quickly into its routines. Children behave well and listen attentively to adults at all times.
- The early years lead has identified where provision can be improved and has worked in association with the local authority to implement changes effectively. Teachers record children's progress systematically and gather evidence to show how they are making progress.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers guide the other adults well to support learning. For instance, in an activity involving digging for vegetables outdoors, children made good progress in response to skilful questioning from teaching assistants about starting letters of the vegetables, then writing the letters on a whiteboard. This extended children's phonics skills.

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	124245
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	442598

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	163
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Picken
Headteacher	Catherine Clarke
Date of previous school inspection	27 November 2012
Telephone number	01902 790253
Fax number	01902 791994
Email address	office@st-pauls-coven.staffs.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

