

# St Paul's Community Primary and Nursery School

Queen's Road, Spalding, PE11 2JQ

**Inspection dates** 4–5 February 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- Too few pupils make good progress through the early years or Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Given pupils' abilities, standards are not as high as they should be by the end of Year 6. Not enough pupils reach higher levels in their work.
- While teaching in some age groups and subjects is good, it varies too much to promote good overall achievement. In particular, the work given to pupils is sometimes too hard or too easy for them.
- Some pupils occasionally stop paying attention and get distracted when teaching does not challenge or interest them, or encourage them to fully engage in learning. In such cases their learning slows.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise the writing skills that they have learned by writing regularly at length.
- In the early years, not enough children make good progress because activities do not consistently encourage them to investigate, explore and learn as well as they can.
- Senior and subject leaders are not monitoring teaching and learning sufficiently rigorously. As a result they are not ensuring that weaknesses in the quality of teaching and in pupils' achievement are promptly identified and tackled.
- The performance targets senior leaders set for staff are not always measurable or clear enough to ensure that teaching and leadership are as effective as possible.

### The school has the following strengths

- Phonics (the linking of letters with the sounds they make) is taught well throughout the school.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school. They know how to keep safe, and get on well with each other.
- Attendance has improved, and this is helping to raise achievement.
- The governing body is challenging the school's work, particularly the quality of teaching and achievement, effectively to ensure they improve quickly.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 22 lessons, three of which were seen with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils while they were learning and playing, and listened to some of them reading. They watched some pupils being supported in small groups.
- One inspector held a formal meeting with a group of pupils to find out their views of the school. He spoke with several parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior, phase and subject leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation about the school, including information about pupils' achievement and the monitoring of teaching. They checked governing body minutes, samples of pupils' work and policies relating to keeping them safe.
- The inspectors considered the 26 parental responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire (Parent View) in carrying out the inspection, and the 17 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Beverley Riddle	Additional Inspector
Michael Smit	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is average in size for a primary school.
- Children attend the Nursery class part-time and the Reception class full-time.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is just above average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave during the school year is high in some year groups.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2013. Since then she has restructured leadership and management at both senior and middle levels.
- The school is entering into a partnership with Witham St Hugh's Academy. The headteacher of the academy, a National Leader of Education, and a Local Leader of Education from his school are planning to work with the headteacher and staff at St Paul's to provide support for teaching and leadership.

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

- Improve teaching throughout the school in order to raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress, by making sure that:
  - pupils have regular chances to practise specific writing skills by writing at length, and know what they should be aiming for
  - pupils of all abilities are given work at the right level of difficulty so that they can all make quick progress
  - teaching is interesting enough to motivate pupils to want to learn as well as they can, and to ensure that they fully participate in learning
  - teachers in different subjects give pupils lots of practice in developing their numeracy skills.
- Strengthen the impact of leaders and managers at all levels by ensuring that:
  - senior and middle leaders take full responsibility for monitoring and quickly improving the quality of teaching and learning
  - staff performance targets are measurable and clearly linked to improvements in teaching, learning and leadership.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not been able to raise teaching or pupils' achievement and behaviour to good levels. The quality of teaching is variable and their checking of the school's work has not been sufficiently comprehensive to be effective.
- The headteacher, however, is showing herself to be a strong, determined leader. She has been very thorough in assessing what the school does well and where it needs to improve. With that in mind, she has restructured the senior and middle leadership team to better meet the school's needs. The staff support her actions in making the school more effective.
- The school works hard to make sure that pupils feel safe and valued. Its safeguarding procedures meet requirements and are effective. Leaders are ensuring that there is no discrimination within the school through the introduction of a new 'fair sanctions and rewards' scheme.
- New methods of teaching reading, writing and numeracy are beginning to pay off. Marking has improved. Pupils like the changes the headteacher is making and their involvement in helping to run the school. Teaching is good in some subjects and classes.
- Inconsistencies in teaching are being addressed, but not as quickly as they could be. Teaching is observed regularly and formally by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, who both know the barriers to good teaching and progress. However, weaknesses such as those in adapting work for pupils of all abilities have not been addressed quickly enough. This is because some senior and middle leaders are not monitoring teaching, learning and pupils' work sufficiently thoroughly enough to address issues promptly.
- The procedures for managing teachers' performance are good. They have three individual targets, matching the areas that the school most needs to improve in teaching and leadership. However, the targets themselves are not all measurable or have clear enough outcomes to ensure that teaching and leadership strengthen as quickly as possible.
- Key stage leaders are working hard to support the staff in planning and preparing the curriculum. They use data to check pupils' progress and report the progress that pupils are making to the headteacher. They are in the early stages of checking the quality of pupils' learning.
- The leadership and management of provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and for disadvantaged pupils, are developing well. Extra help for eligible pupils is considered carefully and their rate of progress is starting to quicken.
- The school prioritises the teaching of literacy and numeracy throughout the school, including daily teaching of guided reading and phonics. Pupils have lessons in lots of subjects or topics and displays confirm this. However, subject leaders do not check the work they do in each subject thoroughly to ensure this. Not all pupils have an equal chance of learning well because their needs are not met equally well. For example, some groups get more effective help and guidance than others.
- The school does a good job in providing experiences for pupils that broaden their outlook on life in modern Britain and their understanding of the opportunities open to them. Year 6 pupils, for example, asked for careers advice following a visit to a skills show, which opened their eyes to the range of opportunities open to them. Pupils have visited a windmill and church, and attended a theatre production, to bring their learning alive.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is promoted appropriately throughout the school. Books and displays show the school gives pupils regular chances to find out about other faiths and cultures. Although they can remember the activities, they find it harder to explain what they stand for and the religion or culture they represent. The school is working on this.

- Sports funding has created opportunities for pupils to develop skills in a wider range of activities. Consequently, numerous pupils have grown in confidence as they have discovered significant skills and talents. Partnerships with other schools provide specialist teaching, coaching for staff and activities at playtimes and lunch times. As a result, the number of pupils who participate in after-school activities has almost doubled in the last year.
- The local authority provides helpful support to the school. It has confidence in the school's capacity to improve and visits regularly to check the impact of strategies and support teachers. Partnerships with other schools are complementing the work in strengthening teaching and leadership. The school is doing all it can to involve parents in their children's learning, such as through art and craft workshops, a cookery course and early years phonics. The majority of parents support all of the school's work.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governors are increasingly effective in supporting and challenging the school. They are well organised, with systems to make sure that they cover all aspects of its work, including safeguarding.
  - Records of governing body meetings show challenging questions being raised, particularly about the standards achieved by the pupils. Governors get a wide range of information from the school but also find out how well it is doing through their independent checking, including through occasional lesson observations. For example, they invite senior and key stage leaders to meetings to question them about their action plans and how they intend to quicken progress in their areas.
  - Governors attend regular training events. They understand what national and school data say about the school's performance.
  - The governors know that pupils' progress is not yet good because teaching is not good. They know the benefit of performance targets and ensure that teachers who need support to strengthen their skills receive it.
  - Governors have a good knowledge of the uses of pupil premium funding and how well it is narrowing gaps in achievement with other groups of pupils. They check the school's finances securely and regularly to ensure that all money spent is making a positive difference to pupils' education.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

## requires improvement

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. In lessons, pupils behave well when teaching interests and involves them and makes them think, but when work is too easy or hard or not interesting, a few lose attention and easily get distracted. In the dining hall, some pupils seem to forget the school's expectations of their conduct and let themselves down.
- Generally, pupils behave very sensibly round the school. They respond quickly to instructions at the end of break and settle to learning quickly.
- Pupils like their school. They value the improvements the headteacher has made. These include the environment for learning and playing, tightening up the uniform policy, the new and fair sanctions and rewards, and the more helpful marking of their work. They also like being given responsibilities, such as being prefects, playground leaders and junior sports leaders. They wear the badges and different colour jumpers that are symbols of their achievements with pride.
- Pupils get on well together throughout the day. From the Nursery onwards, they develop a good awareness of others' feelings, and support and look after each other well.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe because the school is a safe place for them to be at. They trust the staff to help them if they are worried or upset.
- Pupils know their rights and responsibilities. They help to put together class charters, which are displayed in each classroom and which help them to think carefully about how they should act. These develop the

pupils' understanding of the democratic system in which we live and their respect for the rules we have. They are a constant reminder that they should treat other pupils as they want to be treated and are just one of the ways in which pupils demonstrate British values.

- The school makes sure that pupils understand potential dangers posed by railways, water and crossing the road. They are very aware of the importance of using the internet safely.
- Pupils' attendance is monitored very carefully and this has resulted in a three-year rise in attendance rates. It is now in line with the national average and continuing to improve.
- Although a few parents say there is a lot of bullying, the pupils say it seldom happens. The school's records support this. Pupils also say that if it does happen, the staff deal with it quickly.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching in reading, writing and mathematics varies too much to support good progress. Pupils do not have enough chances to write at length, and therefore to strengthen their writing skills as quickly as possible. They rarely see examples of their writing on display in classrooms or corridors to show what they could be aiming for. Also, they have too few opportunities to practise and develop their numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Pupils sometimes find it hard to get interested in their work when activities do not make them really want to learn. In some classes, work is too hard for least able pupils and not sufficiently challenging for the most able pupils. This not only holds back progress, but also results in some restlessness among pupils.
- Pupils like to learn and when work is at the right level of difficulty for all groups of pupils to achieve well, they do so. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils of all abilities made good gains in their learning through writing a newspaper article. The tasks were very closely matched to the individual levels at which they were working, and they all knew exactly what they had to include in their writing.
- The quality of marking has improved a lot. Pupils know in most lessons what they have done well and what to do next, and they learn more quickly when teachers ensure they carry out the corrections they are told to.
- All of the teaching assistants know exactly how to help the pupils who find learning difficult, including those learning English as an additional language. Some are very effective in helping pupils to progress more quickly, especially when their questions help pupils to think more deeply about what they are doing.
- Pupils enjoy reading and do so daily. They like the library, which is attractive and well stocked with books that both boys and girls enjoy. Pupils are further motivated to read because of the badges they wear as evidence of their regular reading.
- The school is starting to have much higher expectations of its most able pupils. In Year 6, this includes providing specialist teaching from a secondary school teacher to ensure that they reach the highest levels possible.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Standards by the end of Year 6 are not as high as they should be, given pupils' ability levels. Not enough pupils make good progress throughout the school. The variability in teaching has not helped pupils to be secure in their knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2014 the pupils in Year 6 did not meet the minimum standards expected by the government for attainment and progress. However, this is misleading because a larger-than-usual proportion of these pupils had joined the school late in Key Stage 2, skewing the data. The pupils who were in the school

throughout Key Stage 2 made better progress and reached higher standards, although their achievement still required improvement.

- Better systems for checking progress and addressing underachievement have been introduced throughout the school. More good teaching and quick support to ensure that there are no gaps in learning have ensured that pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach average standards and to make at least nationally expected progress. More pupils are on track to reach higher levels, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Standards are starting to rise from well below average by the end of Year 2 because, in the early years and in Key Stage 1, the new ways of teaching reading, writing and mathematics are working through and encouraging pupils' better learning. The proportion of pupils reaching the levels expected for their age is getting closer to the national average, although the pupils' basic skills are not yet fully secure, particularly in writing, right through the school. Pupils learn a lot about, for example, constructing sentences but they do not get enough practice in applying those skills to ensure they know them well.
- The improvement in pupils' communication skills is more visible in better standards in phonics. The Year 1 phonics check shows that they have been just a little above those nationally for the last two years. Right from the Nursery class, children quickly learn the correct way to pronounce letters and spell words.
- Disadvantaged pupils have received specific help in reading, writing and mathematics to improve their knowledge and understanding and strengthen their confidence. Last year, their standards in Year 6 were above those of their classmates by four terms in reading and mathematics, and five terms in writing. They were two terms behind other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. They make similar progress to other groups of pupils. The school's data show that some disadvantaged pupils have been learning more slowly than other groups this year, so leaders have arranged extra support that is helping to close the gaps.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also requires improvement. However, it is accelerating where good planning by the special educational needs leader and phase leaders is backed up by effective support from teaching assistants.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language are adding quickly to their skills through Key Stages 1 and 2. They make at least as much progress as other groups because of the very regular chances they get to practise words and sounds and to write them.
- Not enough of the most able pupils learn as well as they could because, until recently, expectations for what they could achieve have not always been high enough. Staff are now becoming more ambitious for all groups of pupils.

### **The early years provision**

### **requires improvement**

- Not enough children in the early years make good progress. The activities staff provide, while varied and enjoyable, do not enable them to learn as deeply as possible through exploration and discovery. The most able children do not always have access to challenging resources or activities to ensure they learn as quickly and as broadly as possible.
- By the end of the early years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is below average, and so they are not all prepared well enough for Year 1 learning.
- Children start the Nursery class with levels of skills and knowledge that are below those typically found, particularly in language and communication. They build up their skills in speaking and communicating with each other quite quickly because the staff focus on strengthening their language skills through the day. The headteacher ensures that all staff have had training in teaching them accurately and interestingly.
- The children learn to behave safely and to share with the other children. The staff are good role models and show their expectations clearly.

- Children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to other groups. The staff know what children need to learn and support them appropriately.
  
- Provision is improving. The early years leader is now using good systems to track and record the children's learning and progress from when they join the Nursery, so that activities can be more closely matched to their ability levels.
  
- The staff are very keen to involve parents in their children's learning and welcome them into school, including participating in workshops that help them support what their children are learning.
  
- Outdoor provision has improved since the last inspection and children use the facility well, for example in broadening their learning through a 'bear hunt'.



## 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>	120423
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	453604

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	244
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Lewis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kira Nicholls
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 February 2013
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