

St Paul's Church of England Primary School

School Lane, Swanley, Kent BR8 7PJ

Inspection dates	19–20 May 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school has continued its rapid improvement under the determined leadership of the new head of school. Staff are committed and well trained. They provide a good quality of education.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. At the end of Year 2, they attain significantly above national expectations. Standards at the end of Year 6 are similar to the national average.
- The governing body is more effective than at the time of the last inspection. The review of its working practices resulted in governors effectively holding leaders to account for the school's performance.
- Children in the early years are happy and keen to learn. A higher proportion than found nationally reach a good level of development. They are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils behave well. Older pupils are kind and friendly to the youngest in school. Pupils feel safe and well looked after.
- Teaching is usually well planned and builds on pupils' prior learning.
- The curriculum is exciting and there are many opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Leadership does not evaluate pupils' assessment information sharply enough to identify where future action is needed. One consequence of this is that those pupils who are most able in key stage 2 do not make the more rapid progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils' skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar are not methodically developed.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching, learning and assessment so that more pupils consistently make better than expected progress by:
 - making sure that the most able pupils in key stage 2 receive sufficient challenge to extend their knowledge and deepen their understanding
 - ensuring that teachers systematically develop and give pupils more opportunities to practise their skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Strengthen the impact of the new leadership structure by:
 - evaluating pupils' achievement more incisively so that priorities and actions for improvement are precise.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leadership is strong because it has tackled the areas for improvement from the last inspection. Pupils now make good progress in all year groups. The new head of school has acted swiftly to continue the improvements that had already been started. She has established a culture of high expectations for all members of the school community. Parents are very positive about how the school cares for their children. It is too early to comment on the impact of the executive headteacher who has only been very recently appointed.
- All staff who responded to the staff questionnaire agree that the school has improved. Weak teaching has been eliminated. Current teachers are very supportive of senior leaders' determination to continue to improve teaching and outcomes. Staff morale is high because they work together as a cohesive team.
- Targets set for teachers are used effectively in holding them to account. Leaders frequently analyse pupils' work, observe teaching and provide useful guidance on how teachers can continue to improve. Teachers say that regular training opportunities and coaching have been useful in helping to refine their skills.
- Good use has been made of the expertise of the two local primary schools that have provided support. Teachers are now accurate in knowing how pupils are progressing because they have verified their views with these other schools.
- Pupil premium funding is well used to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make good progress. Careful use of the funding ensures that pupils have access to additional support in reading, writing and mathematics. The school ensures that disadvantaged pupils have full access to curriculum enrichment activities. School records show that current gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school is small.
- The primary school physical education and sport premium is well used. It has resulted in pupils taking part in numerous inter-school sports competitions within Kent. Pupils said how much they enjoy the after-school clubs in netball, athletics and football. There are increasing rates of participation in all sporting activities. Funding has been spent on purchasing resources such as badminton rackets. The expertise of teachers has been increased as they work alongside qualified gymnastics and tennis coaches. The school has a strong commitment to promote healthy lifestyles. This starts from the early years where funding has been spent on cycle training and safety equipment.
- The school promotes British values effectively. Pupils learn about democracy through electing their classmates to the school council. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively promoted. Pupils develop a good understanding of, and respect for, people of different faiths and cultures that extend beyond the school environment. Pupils in every year group compare Christianity with other world religions, noting similarities and respecting differences.
- The school engages well with parents who are very supportive of the school. Almost all would recommend the school to another parent. One parent expressed the views of many when they said: 'Every morning we get a warm welcome at the gate by senior leaders and the friendly approach has helped my child's confidence and self-esteem improve. They have made good progress because of supportive teachers.'
- A key factor in pupils' improved outcomes is the impact of the curriculum, which is built on a two-year programme to accommodate the mixed-age classes. Leaders have designed a curriculum that motivates pupils and makes good use of the numerous resources found in the school's rural environment. Pupils have the chance to compare Britain with other countries. For example, in the Years 3 and 4 class, pupils were considering the water supply in Britain compared with other countries. They discussed the difficulties of staying healthy when the water in some countries is full of bacteria.
- As they move through the school, pupils develop the skills to think more scientifically. In Year 6, they investigated the factors that made a balloon fly faster. In French, pupils have a growing understanding of the vocabulary and verbs. Extra-curricular activities enhance pupils' understanding and enjoyment of subjects. Many said how much they enjoyed performing in the pop choir or developing their skills in the art club.
- There are frequent meetings with teachers to discuss pupils' progress and leaders have effective tracking systems which map progress. However, leadership is still at an early stage in using this information incisively enough. Actions are still too general rather than specific enough to move improvement on at a rapid pace. This is one reason why those pupils who are most able in key stage 2 do not always make the

more rapid progress of which they are capable.

■ **The governance of the school**

- The governing body has fully embraced the recommendations from the previous inspection. Governors understand how the school is doing when compared with other schools nationally.
 - They have worked hard with the local authority to secure the new executive headteacher. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have acted swiftly to deal with any areas of underperformance.
 - Governors allocate school money effectively. They check that the actions the school takes have a positive impact on pupils' progress, particularly for those pupils who are disadvantaged.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The safeguarding policy is clear and meets the requirements of the Secretary of State's statutory guidance. Staff have undergone first-aid training and some are qualified as paediatric first-aiders. There are clear procedures for keeping pupils safe. For example, risk assessments for residential trips are thorough. The school works well with parents and a range of outside agencies to ensure that all pupils are safeguarded. As a result, the school creates a culture where all pupils feel well supported and cared for.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching has much improved since the last inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge and structure lessons carefully so that pupils learn step by step how to increase their understanding.
- The head of school has ensured that teachers' assessments accurately reflect the progress seen in pupils' books. She has arranged extensive training and moderation with other schools to ensure that the school's views on progress are precise.
- Effective teacher training has ensured that early reading skills are carefully taught. Pupils have regular reading sessions and the school encourages parents to listen to their child read every night. Pupils say they enjoy reading. Some older pupils are able to talk knowledgeably about the different authors they have read.
- Teachers have reviewed the way that they teach mathematics and pupils have the opportunity to develop their fluency and reasoning. Pupils particularly enjoy developing their problem-solving skills especially those relating to real-life situations.
- Teaching and teaching assistants form a close-knit team. They work with individuals or small groups to help pupils access their learning and overcome any difficulties.
- The teaching of writing is effective. Pupils plan, edit and correct their work carefully. Links between literacy and other subjects such as geography help pupils to apply and improve their writing skills. For example, pupils used persuasive writing when writing a leaflet to encourage people to visit the Caribbean. However, skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar are not methodically developed and this has a negative impact on the progress pupils make.
- Teachers do not sufficiently challenge those pupils who are most able to ensure that they work at greater depth and reach the highest levels of attainment in key stage 2. In lessons, teachers do not always move pupils' learning on quickly enough to enable these pupils to make the rapid progress of which they are capable.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are encouraged to help one another and to look after those who are younger than themselves.
- Pupils are pleased with the range of opportunities that the school provides for them to take on responsibility. Those who are school councillors and prefects ensure that staff know pupils' views on a range of issues. Those who are younger are well looked after by older pupils. For example, at lunchtimes older pupils help those in key stage 1 in the dining hall.
- Parents reported how much the school has helped their children to develop their self-confidence. Planned activities, such as the residential trip to an outdoor activity centre, provide a good opportunity for pupils

to become more independent.

- The curriculum ensures that pupils have many opportunities to learn how to keep safe. They know how to keep safe when using the internet and about the dangers of giving out personal information to strangers online. They learn about road safety and junior road safety officers check that pupils know how to cross the road.
- Pupils enjoy their learning. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, or who expressed their views to the inspector consider that behaviour in the school is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. Work in books is neat and well presented.
- Pupils say there is no bullying in school. They know that bullying can take different forms and are very confident that if any problems should arise that teachers would listen to them and help them.
- Pupils conduct themselves well. School records show that behaviour is usually good. Pupils know and understand the school's policy regarding behaviour and are very clear about what is expected of them. Pupils say that behaviour is good most of the time but on occasions in lessons a few do not behave as expected. They say that teachers deal with this well and it does not stop them learning.
- The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are effective.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils now make good progress from their starting points. Last year, in key stage 2, all pupils made the progress that was expected of them in reading and writing. In mathematics, a similar proportion to that found nationally made expected progress.
- The results of the most recent phonics screening check show that pupils make a good start to understanding the sounds that letters make. They now attain similarly to the national average. The small number of pupils who resit in Year 2 also have a good success rate.
- In key stage 1 in 2015, pupils overall attained significantly above the national average. They did well in reading, writing and mathematics. Results in key stage 1 have dramatically improved since the time of the last inspection. Work in books indicates that pupils are continuing to make good progress.
- There are low numbers of pupils in the school who have special educational needs or disability. However, in every year group almost all are making the progress that is expected of them. Much more effective provision has been put in place since the last inspection and this is having a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- There are too few disadvantaged pupils to report their attainment without them being identified. However, over time they do well. For example, in key stage 1 the proportions who gained the higher Level 3 are similar to other pupils nationally. Typically, disadvantaged pupils often make better progress than their classmates. Attainment gaps are small both between their classmates and when compared with all pupils nationally.
- There are good links with a range of secondary schools. Nearly a quarter of the current Year 6 pupils have made good progress from their starting points and have passed the challenging entrance examinations to grammar schools.
- In 2015 in Year 6, pupils made good progress from their starting points. All pupils reached the expected level in reading and writing. Similar proportions to those found nationally reached Level 4 in mathematics. Results in spelling, punctuation and grammar tests were less positive. A scrutiny of pupils' books showed that current pupils still do not display resilient enough skills in these areas.
- Those who are most able do well in key stage 1. In 2015, higher proportions than the national average reached Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics. However, in key stage 2, the proportions of pupils reaching the higher levels were below the national average. Books of current pupils show that this continues to be the case.

Early years provision

is good

- Children join the early years with skills and knowledge which are mostly typical for their age. They make good progress and a higher proportion than found nationally reach a good level of development. As a result, they are well prepared for their learning in Year 1.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Careful teaching of phonics helps children to make good progress in their early reading skills. Children have many opportunities to learn how to form letters and numbers correctly. Often by the end of the Reception Year, children are able to write simple three-letter words and count up to 20. Other children make even better progress from their starting points and can write short sentences and complete addition sums.
- Typically, additional funding is well used to narrow any gap between disadvantaged children and others.
- Children are warmly welcomed into a bright and attractive classroom each morning. Parents say that it is a friendly start to the day. They praise the staff for how well their children have settled into the routines of school and say their children feel safe and secure. One parent expressed the views of many when they said: 'I could not be happier about the provision.' Many like the 'cloud celebrations' where children's achievements and milestones from home are acknowledged in class.
- Leadership is effective. It has a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and the progress children make. The leader ensures that activities are planned which capture children's interests and imaginations. She makes sure that children explore and learn from the rural environment in which the school is situated. For example, children grow seedlings and play in a shelter made of sticks and other natural objects. Leaders recognise that the outdoor area is not as well resourced as it could be and plan to provide more equipment next year.
- Children mostly behave well, are polite and share resources happily. Staff know the children well and relationships are positive. They encourage children to try new experiences and 'have a go' at activities that they may find challenging.

School details

Unique reference number	118590
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10009191

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	103
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Strachan
Executive Headteacher	Gillian Lovatt-Young
Telephone number	01322 664324
Website	st-pauls-swanley.kent.sch.uk
Email address	office@st-pauls-swanley.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30–31 January 2014

Information about this school

- St Paul's is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the early years are taught in one full-time Reception class. There are three other mixed-age classes.
- The majority of pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is much lower than that found in most schools. The pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government for those pupils eligible for free school meals in the last six years, pupils who have been looked after continuously for one day or more and those pupils who have been adopted from care.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is similar to the national average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The leadership structure has changed since the last inspection. There is a new head of school and governors have just appointed an executive headteacher, who is headteacher at Shoreham Village Primary School.
- Following the last inspection, the school received support from Hextable Primary School and Chevening Primary School. These arrangements have now ceased.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes. There were seven lessons and part-lessons visited, most of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils and the inspector looked at work in books and listened to some pupils reading. There were also informal discussions with pupils at break time regarding what it is like to be a pupil at this school.
- The inspector took account of 12 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and also spoke to parents at the end of the school day.
- The views expressed by members of staff in six questionnaires were considered.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation and policies including the school improvement plan. Information about the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally was considered along with documents about pupils' current attainment and progress. Documents checking the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, alongside records relating to behaviour, attendance, child protection and safeguarding, were also examined.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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