

# St Paul's Community Primary and Nursery School, Spalding

Queen's Road, Spalding, Lincolnshire PE11 2JQ

## Inspection dates

1–2 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Some teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They do not match tasks well to the range of abilities in their class so that pupils can make the best possible progress.
- The development of pupils' language and communication skills is not always promoted strongly enough.
- Teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to write creatively.
- Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching mean that pupils' motivation to learn varies, and this affects how much progress they make.
- Although the school is improving, the actions of leaders, including those of the governing body, have not yet resulted in consistently good teaching in all year groups.
- Pupils make inconsistent progress through the school. This means that some pupils are not achieving as highly as they should, although recent changes have brought higher standards.
- Some leaders are not fully involved in checking the quality of learning and helping staff to improve their teaching.
- Some aspects of pupils' cultural understanding are not well developed.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, other senior leaders and governors know how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to move forward.
- Effective training and guidance provided for staff is helping teaching to improve strongly.
- Standards in phonics are rising through a consistent approach to teaching and a good match of tasks to pupils' abilities.
- Pupils say they feel safe. They behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning.
- Strong pastoral care promotes pupils' welfare effectively.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start. Good teaching means they achieve well in the Reception Year and are well prepared for Year 1.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils make faster progress by making sure that teachers consistently:
  - have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - set the right level of challenge for pupils of differing abilities, including the most able
  - provide activities that interest and engage pupils so that they are motivated to learn
  - provide wider opportunities for pupils to communicate their ideas and to extend their vocabulary
  - encourage pupils to write descriptively more often to promote the creative use of language alongside other forms of writing.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
  - developing the role of all leaders fully so that they help to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects and areas of responsibility
  - extending the curriculum so that pupils gain a wider and deeper understanding of people different from themselves.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders have coped well with the challenges presented by significant staff changes since the previous inspection. They unify staff in a common sense of purpose but some of their plans for improvement have been slowed by difficult circumstances beyond their control.
- The headteacher's drive and determination is now moving the school forward rapidly. She ensures an attractive learning environment where the well-being of pupils and staff is nurtured and good teaching and behaviour can flourish. As a result, teaching is improving strongly and pupils behave well.
- The headteacher acts on effective advice from the local authority and external advisers. Good partnerships with local schools enable staff to share expertise with others.
- The headteacher and senior leaders give staff good guidance on how to improve their practice. They provide the training staff need to do their jobs well, with a positive effect on raising standards – for example in phonics.
- Leadership roles have developed well since the previous inspection. However, not all leaders yet identify what teachers should do to improve the learning of specific groups of pupils, including pupils who need to catch up and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Leaders use systems effectively to check pupils' progress. These systems help them to see which groups of pupils are doing well and which need extra help to improve.
- The pupil premium funding helps eligible pupils to make gains in their social and academic development. Changes to the level of support and training for teaching assistants means that lower-ability pupils, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are now making better progress than previously.
- Leaders make good use of the additional funding that they receive to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. It is used mainly to fund additional staffing and specialist teachers, as well as to provide specific resources to meet individual pupils' needs.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Leaders have ensured that teaching provides more opportunities for pupils to write in different subjects and at length. Pupils enjoy the trips to outside locations that enhance learning. Additional clubs, such as the eco club and the gardening club, are popular with pupils.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Creative, musical and artistic activities encourage pupils to express themselves. Pupils learn about people, places and eras and take an interest in new experiences.
- Although the school's population is culturally diverse and pupils get on well together, a less well developed area of their learning is the extent to which pupils understand faiths and cultures that are different from their own. This means that, although they show respect and tolerance towards each other, they are not as well prepared as they could be for life in modern Britain.

- Good use of the primary physical education and sport funding has improved teachers' skills in delivering good-quality physical education lessons and has increased pupils' participation in physical activity.

### **Governance of the school**

- The governing body supports the school well. Governors are involved in identifying key priorities and they check how well the school is working towards its aims. They ask relevant questions and hold school leaders to account rigorously.
- Governors know about the school's strengths and areas for development. They understand the challenges presented by difficulties in staff recruitment and retention but are committed to ensuring that pupils benefit from high-quality teaching.
- Governors meet school leaders regularly. The governing body is well informed about the curriculum and the impact of the school's use of additional funding. Governors receive regular information about pupils' attainment and progress and raise questions if pupils are not doing well enough.
- Governors recognise the importance of good communication with parents and are keen to develop links further. For example, a recent appointment to the governing body is intended to improve links with parents who speak English as an additional language.
- Governors check and review policies systematically to ensure that the school's safeguarding systems are fit for purpose.

### **Safeguarding**

- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff receive regular training. They understand the school's systems and know how to report any concerns. Leaders ensure that the checks made on adults who work with pupils are thorough.
- Leaders log any concerns over pupils' welfare and work well with external agencies. Effective communication with parents helps leaders to address any worries promptly.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' safety well. Pupils learn about staying safe online and how to avoid potential risks. They act as junior road safety officers and participate in workshops and assemblies run by visitors, such as the local police and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC). In this way, they receive guidance on how to keep themselves safe from potential dangers such as exploitation.
- Strategies to prevent bullying are promoted through assemblies and in lessons. Leaders deal effectively with any issues that arise. They involve pupils and parents in ensuring that incidents of bullying are kept to a minimum.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- There is some variation in what teachers expect pupils to achieve and this leads to pupils in some lessons not learning as much as they could.
- There is inconsistency in how well teachers match work to the range of abilities in the class and this means the work is too easy for some and too hard for others. In these cases, the tasks do not sufficiently develop the understanding and skills of the most

able pupils or provide enough practice for lower-ability pupils. This restricts pupils' progress and the level of interest they take in their learning.

- Pupils' speaking skills are not as well developed as they could be because some teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning and to share their ideas with others.
- Pupils have opportunities to write at length, particularly in subjects other than English. Some teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to write descriptively, however. This means that pupils do not make as much progress as they could in expressing their ideas imaginatively or developing fluent and interesting writing.
- Staff do not consistently focus strongly enough on widening pupils' vocabulary. This limits pupils' understanding when they read and the rate at which they improve their writing.
- Some teachers are better than others at pitching the work to pupils' ability. In these cases pupils are fully motivated and work enthusiastically and quickly. For example, in a mathematics lesson, staff skilfully developed pupils' skills in rounding to the nearest whole number. Pupils, including the most able, concentrated well and made good progress in consolidating, practising and extending their mathematical knowledge.
- Staff follow a whole-school approach to the teaching of phonics. The training that staff receive helps them to teach phonics effectively and standards of reading are rising.
- The teaching of other aspects of reading is improving strongly and pupils now make better progress than previously. Teachers encourage pupils to read regularly. They use a range of ways to promote the enjoyment of reading so that all pupils, including boys, are motivated to read.
- Teachers introduce pupils to classic authors such as Tennyson and link pupils' reading well to their writing. For example, during the inspection, older pupils explained the story of the Lady of Shallott well. They used what they knew to write diaries and showed empathy with the main character's feelings.
- Some staff make interesting links between subjects to help pupils to make sense of their learning. For example, during a topic on space, pupils applied their mathematical skills to calculate distance and speed and developed their scientific understanding of the conditions needed for life.
- Teaching assistants and additional staff work well with pupils. They aid those who find it difficult to behave well to concentrate on their learning. They help pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to make small steps towards their individual targets.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The school's motto to 'realise aspirations' is reflected in the opportunities available to pupils, including finding out about jobs for the future.

- Staff encourage pupils to recognise and develop good social and personal skills to aid their learning. Pupils like receiving awards for their achievements and for good attendance.
- Staff provide a good level of emotional support for those pupils who need it, including those whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable.
- Those pupils who are new to the school, especially those who join mid-year with little or no English, are made to feel welcome and are helped to settle quickly.
- Pupils accept jobs around the school to help their teachers and other pupils. They act as librarians and play leaders. Those who are school councillors help to improve the school environment. Older pupils read with younger pupils.
- Pupils say they feel safe. They know about the different forms of bullying. They recognise the potential risks of using the internet and social media because this is covered well by the curriculum. Pupils say that everyone is usually kind to each other but that bullying does sometimes occur. The school's records show that any concerns raised by pupils or parents are followed up promptly.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school is a calm and orderly place. Pupils settle to their learning quickly and work well with a range of adults. They engage well with each other at playtimes and make good use of playground equipment.
- Pupils spoken with during the inspection agreed that most pupils behave well and they get on well together. They understand the school's rules and sanctions, which are applied consistently by staff.
- Pupils recognise that some pupils find it difficult to behave well and receive help to improve their behaviour. Pupils said they are pleased when everyone's behaviour is good. They commented, however, that they would like their good behaviour to be more fully recognised during lessons.
- Pupils enjoy learning most when lessons are interesting. Not all teachers make the most of pupils' positive attitudes, however, by fully engaging them in tasks that will motivate them and generate good learning.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Not enough pupils make consistently good progress to reach the standards of which they are capable. In 2016, standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 were below the expected levels.
- In 2016, the percentage of the most able pupils, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, who reached the higher standards at the end of Year 6 was below average. This is because work does not always challenge the most able to do their very best. Teachers do not always expect enough from this group of pupils, although there are some good examples of challenging work, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make varied rates of progress. They make the best progress when they work closely with adults and have

access to suitable resources. In other cases, they do not do as well as they might because teachers do not match tasks well to their needs.

- In 2016, pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds did less well than their classmates and other pupils nationally. They are now catching up. In key stage 1, disadvantaged pupils are ahead of their classmates because of the improved teaching of phonics, which pupils use well in their reading and writing. In key stage 2, their progress varies. Some are making accelerated progress. However, progress is not yet consistently good enough in all classes to ensure that disadvantaged pupils reach the standards expected for their age.
- Pupils who join the school with little or no English make good progress in acquiring English language skills. However, in reading, writing and mathematics, their progress varies as much as that of their classmates. They do best when work is well matched to their ability.
- Leaders are now successfully improving the quality of teaching for pupils and standards are rising. The good start that children make in the early years is being built on strongly during key stage 1. The percentage of pupils currently on track to reach the expected standards by the end of key stage 1 is much greater than in 2016. This means that pupils are better prepared for their learning in key stage 2 than they have been in recent years.
- Current pupils in Year 6 are making better gains than previous pupils in that year group, especially in reading where standards are now close to average. As a result, they are more suitably prepared for their learning in secondary school than previous pupils in Year 6.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Good leadership ensures strong teamwork and a consistent approach to learning between the Nursery and the Reception class. Staff routinely collect evidence of children's learning and what they have achieved and share it with parents.
- There are good arrangements for children when they start in the early years. Staff maintain good daily links with parents and help them to understand their children's learning.
- Teaching is good. Activities in the outdoor areas extend children's learning well. Tasks encourage curiosity and exploration, and promote the effective development of basic skills. For example, when children were making bird feeders during the inspection, staff extended children's understanding and their vocabulary by encouraging them to talk about what they were doing.
- Staff give the right level of support to those children who need it, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to help them to achieve well.
- There is a suitable balance between tasks that are led by adults and those that children choose for themselves. Children engage with their learning well because activities are interesting. Children know the routines and follow instructions well. They behave safely because staff promote strongly the idea of sharing and respect for each other.

- In the Nursery, the provision for two-year olds is effective. Staff build children's confidence and help them to make good gains in their personal development and learning.
- When children start in the early years their skills are lower than those typical for their age, especially in communication, reading and writing. They make good progress in these and other areas of development.
- The percentage of children who reach an overall good level of development is increasing year on year and is now close to national figures. This means that children are well prepared for their learning in Year 1.



## School details

Unique reference number	120423
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10023102

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Croker
Headteacher	Shakira Nicholls
Telephone number	01775 723326
Website	<a href="http://www.spaldingstpauls.org.uk">www.spaldingstpauls.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@spaldingstpauls.org.uk">enquiries@spaldingstpauls.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	4–5 February 2015

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is smaller than the average primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- About a third of the school's pupils speak English as an additional language, which is well above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- In 2016, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

- The early years provision comprises a Nursery, which children attend for the morning or afternoon session, and a Reception class which children attend full time.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced significant staff changes.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 15 lessons, some of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also observed the teaching of small groups of pupils. In all, 10 members of staff were seen teaching.
- Inspectors looked at samples of work from all classes. They talked with pupils about their work during lessons and listened to pupils read. Inspectors met with groups of pupils.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors held meetings with governors, school leaders and staff. An inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority and an external consultant who works with the school.
- Inspectors analysed the 26 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and took into account parents' written comments. Inspectors also analysed the responses to a recent survey conducted by the school. An inspector spoke with some parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's systems and documentation relating to safeguarding. They looked at information about pupils' attainment and progress, and about their attendance. Inspectors looked at school improvement plans and evidence of the monitoring of teaching.

## Inspection team

Viv McTiffen, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Lyn-Cook	Ofsted Inspector
Jay Virk	Ofsted Inspector

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