

Paulerspury Church of England Primary School

High Street, Paulerspury, Towcester, Northamptonshire NN12 7NA

Inspection dates

11–12 July 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not taken effective action to prevent a decline in standards over time.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 were below the national averages in 2016. Standards declined further in 2017, to well below average.
- Standards and rates of progress in writing and mathematics declined at the end of key stage 2 in 2017. Progress in writing was well below average.
- The provisional key stage 2 results for 2018 show a decline in mathematics and in grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Until recently, leaders' and governors' view of the school's performance was over generous. This was because the system for assessing and analysing pupils' progress was inaccurate.
- Leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good across the school.
- Teachers do not consistently set work that is well matched to pupils' abilities and interests.
- Some teachers' expectations for the presentation of pupils' written work are not high enough.
- Occasionally, particularly in key stage 2, pupils lose concentration in class and disturb the learning of other pupils.
- Teaching assistants are not consistently well deployed to help pupils learn effectively.

The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed headteacher is leading the school effectively.
- The provisional results for 2018 show improvements in all subjects at the end of key stage 1 and in writing at greater depth at the end of key stage 2.
- Safeguarding is effective.
- Pupils' conduct around school is calm and orderly. Attendance is above average.
- The teaching of reading, including phonics, is effective.
- Leadership and teaching in early years are good. Children make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - continuing to monitor and evaluate closely the impact of the actions taken to improve teaching and learning
 - responding promptly and appropriately to the findings of monitoring and evaluation activities
 - ensuring that the revised system for assessing pupils' attainment and progress is rapidly implemented across the school, to provide an accurate measure of pupils' performance.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to secure sustained improvement by ensuring that:
 - teachers set work in writing and mathematics that is well matched to pupils' abilities
 - effective teaching enables pupils in upper key stage 2 to master the mathematical skills and knowledge expected for their age
 - teachers' expectations for the presentation of pupils' work and the standard of their handwriting are consistently high across the school
 - teaching assistants are used effectively and have greater impact on learning.
- Ensure that standards of behaviour in lessons, and pupils' attitudes to learning, are consistently high in all year groups.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Until very recently, leaders did not make sure that the arrangements for assessing and analysing pupils' progress were rigorous. As a result of inaccurate assessments and weak teaching, attainment and rates of progress in key stages 1 and 2 declined over time.
- Leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good across the school. In the past, weaker teaching was not accurately identified, and effective support provided to improve its quality.
- The new headteacher has quickly and accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses of the school. He has put in place well-thought-out plans for improvement. The provisional results for 2018 show that there are early signs of improvement, particularly in key stage 1.
- In the past, teachers' assessments were unreliable and over generous. The headteacher has recently introduced a system for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics more accurately.
- During the inspection, staff, parents and carers, and governors expressed confidence in the new leadership team. They judge that the school has 'vastly improved' in recent months and that the headteacher has 'a clear vision to take the school forward'. All members of staff who responded to the online survey stated that they are proud to work at the school.
- Middle leaders have become more effective since the last inspection. The leader for English and the coordinator for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities have more prominent roles in school. They are increasingly involved, alongside senior leaders, in checking the quality of teaching and learning. There is evidence that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and balanced. It is enhanced by the provision of a wide range of popular after-school activities such as sports, art and cookery. The school's provision for music is strong. The school choir performs regularly at concerts and events. All pupils in Years 3 and 4 are currently learning to play the ukulele. During a discussion, pupils recalled memorable topics such as 'Poland', 'France' and a 'Victorian day'. Through all these activities, pupils acquire a suitable range of knowledge and skills.
- Leaders and staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. During collective worship, I observed pupils listening attentively to the leader and participating respectfully during the invitation for reflection. Pupils have a basic understanding and appreciation of British values. The work of the school council is currently being strengthened to enhance this aspect of the curriculum.
- Leaders ensure that they use the additional physical education and sport funding effectively to promote pupils' physical fitness, health and well-being and enhance staff expertise.

Governance of the school

- Members of the governing body acknowledge that, in the past, they did not have an accurate view of the school's performance. As a result, they did not hold leaders to account rigorously enough.
- Governors responded decisively to the recommendations from the last inspection relating to governance. This has resulted in significant improvements in their effectiveness. In particular, they are tenacious in making sure that assessment information is presented to them in a clear and accessible format.
- Governors receive regular and accurate reports about the use of pupil premium funding and the additional funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. This ensures that governors have a clear picture of the impact of the spending on raising standards.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All the employment checks are up to date and in line with statutory requirements.
- All members of staff, and governors, receive regular training updates regarding safeguarding. Staff who spoke with me were clear in their understanding of the school's procedures for raising concerns. They respond appropriately to any pupil welfare concerns that arise.
- The school's work to support its vulnerable pupils and families is strong.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good in all year groups. This means that some pupils do not learn and progress as well as they should.
- Teachers do not set work that is consistently well matched to pupils' abilities and interests, notably in key stage 2. When this happens, pupils lose focus, there is some off-task behaviour and lessons do not flow smoothly.
- Teachers' expectations for the presentation of pupils' work, and the quality of their handwriting, are not consistently high across the school.
- Some teachers do not provide guidance and feedback for pupils in a way that complies with the school's policy. Consequently, some pupils tend to repeat errors in their work and do not have a clear understanding of how to improve.
- The teaching assistants who provide specific support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are effective in promoting pupils' learning and development. However, the general additional support in lessons is not targeted consistently well to enable all pupils, especially the less able, to make good progress over time.
- Pupils in key stage 2, especially in Years 5 and 6, have significant gaps in their mathematical knowledge, as a result of weak teaching in the past.
- Earlier in the year, leaders and teachers implemented a new, more systematic approach to the teaching of writing, in which pupils have more regular opportunities to

write at length. Evidence from the latest assessments, from observations of learning and from pupils' workbooks confirms that this is having a positive impact on the quality of pupils' writing.

- Similarly, a new approach to the teaching of mathematics has been introduced. Teachers are increasingly using their improved subject knowledge and questioning to deepen pupils' understanding through problem-solving. This was seen especially in key stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4.
- The teaching of science is strong. Pupils' workbooks are well presented and show evidence of pupils' pride and interest in their work. For example, pupils had produced carefully drawn diagrams to show how the human heart works.
- The teaching of reading, including phonics, is a strength of the school. Younger pupils use phonic skills effectively in their reading and writing. Older pupils eagerly read a selection of books with confidence and enjoyment.
- Parents who spoke with me during the inspection and who completed the online survey say that they are happy with the information they receive from the school about their children's progress and the homework that is set.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Pupils do not display consistently positive attitudes to learning. This has an impact on their progress in reading, writing and mathematics, especially in key stage 2.
- Evidence from pupils' workbooks shows inconsistencies in the presentation of their work. This indicates that some pupils lack pride in their work.
- Pupils who spoke with me described the learning and activities they enjoy, in particular sporting and artistic opportunities. They said that they feel safe in school because the staff are kind and caring. Staff and parents concur that the school is safe.
- In our discussion, pupils emphasised that bullying is not an issue at the school. They could describe teaching they had received about what to do in the case of any concerns. Leaders' records confirm that instances of bullying are very rare.
- Leaders and staff promote pupils' health and well-being effectively. Healthy snacks are encouraged. During the inspection, I observed pupils in Years 5 and 6 working effectively in small groups as part of a science lesson. They were keenly engaged in carrying out online research with a view to producing posters on the theme of 'Keeping Healthy'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Teachers in key stage 2 do not insist on consistently high standards of behaviour in lessons. Pupils who spoke with me said that their lessons are sometimes disturbed by

the troublesome behaviour of some pupils.

- Where behaviour is good and attitudes to learning are positive, lessons flow well. In these cases, pupils show courtesy and respect towards each other and to their teachers.
- Pupils' conduct around school is generally calm and orderly. Their conduct in the whole-school collective worship was observed to be respectful and attentive.
- During the inspection, I observed pupils' conduct at playtimes and in the dining hall. These sessions were well supervised, orderly and happy social occasions. Pupils responded well to routines and expectations and were clearly enjoying the range of activities available for them.
- Attendance is good. Overall rates of absence are typically below, or in line with, the national average. Persistent absence is well below average.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' rates of progress and standards of attainment at the end of key stages 1 and 2 have declined over time.
- In 2017, pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2 was below average in mathematics and average in reading. It was well below average in writing.
- Provisional information about pupils' performance at the end of key stage 2 in 2018 shows that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in mathematics, and grammar, spelling and punctuation has declined. However, a greater proportion of pupils did exceed the expected standard in writing.
- The provisional outcomes at the end of key stage 1 are encouraging. The proportions of pupils attaining and exceeding the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics have increased.
- New approaches to assessment and to the teaching of English and mathematics are having an increasingly positive impact on standards, especially in key stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4. These improvements were confirmed during the inspection by observing learning in lessons, checking pupils' workbooks and talking with leaders, staff and pupils.
- Standards and rates of progress in reading are strengths of the school and are typically in line with, or just above, the national averages by the end of key stage 2.
- As a result of effective teaching, the majority of pupils typically achieve the required standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership and teaching in early years are good. The early years leader, and her experienced teaching assistant, work as a close and effective team. They know the children, and their needs, very well. This enables them to assess children's progress and adapt the teaching and curriculum regularly and precisely. They cater effectively for children's needs and different stages of development.

- Children enter early years with knowledge and skills that are broadly typical for their age. As a result of good teaching, children make good progress towards the early learning goals and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Children have frequent, well-planned opportunities to develop their language skills. For example, some were observed conversing excitedly with each other to design a 'racing track' in the outdoor area. They showed initiative when selecting what they needed from the resources available. In another part of the area, the teacher used questioning effectively to draw out responses from children using the sand tray.
- The work on display within the classroom, and recorded in the online assessment system, shows evidence of children's progress in writing. By this stage of the year, most children are forming letters accurately and writing legibly. Many are developing skill and confidence in a range of writing styles, such as instructions for 'how to make a sock puppet'.
- Safeguarding in early years is effective, as in the rest of the school. The provision is safe and secure. Children are well cared for, staff are familiar with the procedures for raising concerns and training is up to date.
- Early years staff liaise effectively with parents and carers. Children's transition into school is managed effectively, for example through a series of 'stay and play' sessions for children, parents and siblings. Parents interact regularly with the home-school online communication and assessment tool, and with the home-school reading journals.

School details

Unique reference number	121986
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10048225

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	113
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Merrilyn Berry
Headteacher	Robin Bunting
Telephone number	01327 811674
Website	www.paulerspury.school.co.uk
Email address	bursar@paulerspury.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 January 2018

Information about this school

- Paulerspury Church of England Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes. The early years provision consists of a mixed Reception and Year 1 class.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2017. The senior teacher, who is also the early years leader, took up the additional position of special educational needs coordinator in September 2017.
- The leader for English took up her position, internally, in January 2018.
- The school receives support from the local authority and from the Diocese of Peterborough. The school receives informal support through a school-to-school partnership with Moulton Primary School, brokered by the local authority.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities who are supported through an education, health and care plan is well below the national average.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below that seen nationally.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in eight lessons or part lessons, across all classes, some jointly with the headteacher. She also observed a whole-school act of collective worship.
- The inspector looked at work in an extensive range of pupils' books and considered the school's assessment information on the progress and standards achieved by current pupils.
- The inspector visited the school library, listened to pupils read and talked with them about their enjoyment of reading.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and senior teacher, and leaders with responsibility for English, mathematics, early years and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The inspector met with those responsible for the management of behaviour, bullying and disadvantaged pupils. She also met with other teachers and support staff.
- The inspector met with seven members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector conducted a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils and spoke informally with pupils during lessons, lunchtimes and breaktimes.
- The inspector met with parents at the start of the school day. She also considered the 50 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- The inspector considered the responses to the staff and pupil online surveys.
- The inspector considered a wide range of documentation, including the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation summary, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school's current information on pupils' attainment and progress, attendance records, behaviour and bullying logs, external reports on the work of the school, monitoring and evaluation records and a range of documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Christine Watkins, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2018