

St Paul's Catholic Primary School

Bourne Road, Paulsgrove, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO6 4JD

Inspection dates

10–11 July 2018

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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The executive headteacher and the head of school provide strong leadership. They ensure that pupils and staff are at the heart of any decisions they make.
- The executive headteacher, head of school and senior leaders have a highly accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the areas where further improvements are needed.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally well promoted. The school's ethos of 'aspire, believe, succeed' and its mission statement 'Do Everything With Love' are evident in all aspects of school life.
- Pupils' behaviour in class is good. Pupils settle quickly to work and enjoy learning. They describe their lessons as 'interesting and fun'.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a strong understanding of the needs of their pupils and how to help them succeed.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe.
- Disadvantaged pupils, and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, receive effective additional support. Most achieve well from their different starting points.
- Governors are improving their effectiveness and have an understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, they acknowledge that some aspects of their work, for example the quality of communication with parents, need improving.
- The leadership of the early years is strong. Staff work collaboratively to ensure good provision for the children in their care.
- The curriculum is lively and interesting. Pupils enjoy the wide range of topics they study.
- Leaders' actions to improve pupils' progress and outcomes in writing across the school are beginning to prove successful.
- Nurture provision at the school is having a very positive impact on those pupils with challenging behaviour.
- Some middle leaders are new to the role and do not yet have a sufficiently strong influence on their areas of responsibility.
- The most able pupils are not consistently challenged. As a result, they do not reliably attain the high standards of which they are capable.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching, learning and assessment in order to improve progress by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged across the curriculum, so that by the end of key stage 2, an increased proportion of pupils are achieving at the higher standard.
- Further improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - developing the effectiveness of the governing body, ensuring that communication between governors and parents is up to date and accessible through the website and other media
 - developing middle leaders who are new to their roles, to enable them to identify priorities and accurately evaluate the impact of their actions on pupils' achievement in the subjects they lead.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher and the head of school are ambitious and committed to ensuring that teaching and learning equip pupils with the social and academic skills needed today. They successfully place the pupils' best interests at the heart of the school's work to improve pupils' outcomes.
- School leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and ensure that areas for improvement are suitably addressed. Regular progress meetings with staff ensure that all pupils are monitored carefully, and that effective additional support is provided to enable pupils to catch up. The success of this support is evident in the progress that targeted pupils make across a range of subjects.
- Senior leaders are effectively improving the quality of education provided by the school. Following disappointing writing outcomes in Year 6 in both 2016 and 2017, leaders implemented a new curriculum that focused on high-quality texts. Pupils make good use of these texts, linked to a range of subjects, to develop their skills in writing for a purpose. School assessment data, work in pupils' books and provisional test information for 2018 show that pupils' progress and outcomes have improved significantly this year.
- Senior leaders have established a strong working partnership with staff. Newly qualified teachers speak passionately about how the school has not just supported them academically, but also emotionally throughout the year. Staff who responded to Ofsted's staff survey reported that they enjoy working at the school.
- Leaders and governors are honest about the school's strengths and areas for development. The school's self-evaluation is thorough and detailed. Leaders have drawn up an appropriately detailed action plan. This plan includes, for example, a continued focus both on writing across the school and on the progress made by the most able pupils.
- Subject leaders who are new to the role do not yet have the leadership skills needed to develop their individual subjects. As a result, they have not had an impact on improving the quality of teaching or learning. Senior leaders are aware of this and have started to work effectively alongside these leaders to develop their leadership skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. The prayer area provides pupils with an area for quiet reflection. Displays of prayers demonstrate that pupils think deeply about themselves and others. Pupils who demonstrate the qualities of being resilient, reflective, a team player and inquisitive in class are celebrated in weekly assemblies. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about different beliefs through religious education. During the inspection, pupils' interest in the World Cup was being used as a stimulus for them to find out about different cultures. Signs around the school are written in a range of languages, aiding pupils for whom English is not their first language. Pupils are mainly tolerant and respectful of each other.
- Leaders make effective use of the pupil premium funding to improve disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and their emotional and social well-being. The funding is used to

provide additional teaching where necessary, and to ensure that these pupils participate in the full range of school activities. As a result, these pupils make good progress from their starting points.

- The school's SEN coordinator provides strong leadership. Funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is used effectively for those who require additional support, such as for speech and language and behavioural needs. As a result, the needs of these pupils are well met. Most make good progress from their starting points.
- The primary physical education and sport funding is spent well. Pupils have opportunities to take part in a range of activities, including golf, creative dance, netball and basketball. The number of pupils attending extra-curricular sports clubs has doubled over the past year.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils say they enjoy learning through topics such as 'The Egyptians' and 'What a Wonderful World'. Pupils particularly enjoy the homework that is linked to this work. Cross-curricular links are evident in pupils' books and on displays around the school, for example pupils' mathematical skills being applied in geography and science lessons.
- Leaders ensure that there is a wide range of extra-curricular activities available for pupils, across all age groups. Examples of these include construction and board-game clubs for the younger pupils, and business, table-tennis and the 'glee' club for pupils in Year 6. These clubs are popular with pupils and are well attended.
- Only a small proportion of parents responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. However, of those who did, the majority said that their children were happy at school and that they would recommend the school to others.
- The local authority has an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. It provides effective support that is appropriate to the needs of the school.

Governance of the school

- The governing body recognises its strengths and the areas for development. Governors readily seek advice from the local authority, the diocese and other local governing bodies to ensure that they fulfil their duties. They are now challenging the school in a more effective way, most recently about pupil premium funding and its effect on the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors are aware that their communication with, and visibility to, parents needs to be improved. Prior to the inspection, much of the governor information on the school's website was out of date. Consequently, parents did not know who to contact should they have any concerns. The governing body is currently researching ways to engage more readily with parents.
- Governors ensure that all safeguarding procedures are checked regularly, including the checks made on people who work in the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff recruitment procedures are robust. All members of staff, including lunchtime supervisory staff, understand their roles in relation to keeping pupils safe. The single central record of staff recruitment checks is compliant with statutory requirements. Leaders ensure that accurate records relating to safeguarding are kept up to date.
- There are effective systems to protect pupils at risk from harm. The school has established close links with outside agencies and involves them immediately if there are concerns about a pupil at the school. Absences are followed up rigorously to ensure pupils' safety.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school. They know who to talk to if they have any worries and are positive that staff would respond quickly to any concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have established good relationships with their pupils and manage their groups well. Teaching is lively and engaging. Pupils describe their teachers as 'kind, friendly and helpful'.
- The introduction of high-quality texts is having a positive effect on both reading and writing across the school. Opportunities to write at length across a range of styles in different curriculum areas are evident in books. Work sampling and school tracking information show that pupils are making strong progress with their writing.
- Staff teach phonics well. As a result, pupils acquire the skills they need to support them with their reading and writing. Leaders identified that lower-attaining pupils were not being taught more complex sounds and words. This has been addressed and the improvements have had a positive impact on the progress made by this group.
- Assessment systems are well established and are carefully used to track the pupils' progress. Teachers are held to account for the progress of pupils who are at risk of falling behind. Teaching is adjusted, and targeted support put in place to support these pupils as appropriate.
- Leaders have introduced practical activities through 'independent bags' for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, which support pupils' individual needs and help to develop their independence. This initiative is having a positive impact on supporting these pupils to achieve challenging targets.
- Teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils understand what they are expected to learn. As a result, occasionally pupils do not know what to do to meet their objectives.
- Art and music are strengths of the school. High-quality artwork is displayed throughout the school. Pupils respond knowledgeably when asked to explain why they are using certain techniques or shades in their artwork. During the inspection, pupils in key stage 2 performed with skill and enthusiasm at their end-of-term music concert. In the Reception class, children were able to talk confidently about rhythm, pulse and texture of music.

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 ethos of 'aspire, believe, succeed' and its mission statement of 'Do Everything With Love' are at the centre of developing each pupil as a person, ready for life in today's world. Pupils are respectful, self-motivated learners. They take pride in their work and their uniform. Good citizenship is promoted through a range of activities, for example visiting a local care home to share flowers with the residents.
- Pupils appreciate the opportunities to take on various roles, including being school council representatives or Year 6 school prefects. These opportunities help them develop a strong sense of responsibility.
- Pupils are clear about the differing forms of bullying and how to keep safe online. They report that there are occasional incidents of bullying, but these are dealt with effectively by either Year 6 prefects or members of staff. Detailed school records show that the number of incidents of bullying has fallen rapidly over the past three years.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In class, pupils are motivated and settle quickly to work. They enjoy talking about their learning and cooperate well together. Teachers are quick to praise good behaviour. Over time, pupils develop into confident, resilient learners.
- Leaders have worked hard to support a small number of pupils whose behaviour has been challenging. The well-led nurture provision set up for these pupils has improved their behaviour and social skills. As a result, the number of exclusions and repeat exclusions from school has fallen rapidly over the past two years.
- Pupils' attendance is in line with the national average. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is below the national average. Leaders are tenacious in following up absences and providing challenge and support to families. For example, the home-school worker diligently follows up absences with pupils' families where necessary, to find out why the pupil is not at school. Consequently, the rate of attendance of disadvantaged pupils is steadily improving. During the inspection, the behaviour of pupils in key stage 2 during both break and lunchtime was good. This was supported by pupils having access to a wide range of activities and games that they enjoy playing. However, in key stage 1 the lack of playtime activities and limited equipment available meant that some pupils did not play as well together.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' work and the school's own progress information indicate that most pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make strong progress across a range of subjects and are well prepared for their next stage of learning. This is because leaders and staff know each pupil well and plan programmes that support them.
- Following disappointing outcomes in reading at the end of Year 6 in 2017, the school

adjusted the way that reading was taught throughout the school. Provisional information for 2018 indicates a marked increase in the proportion of pupils attaining age-related expectations at the end of Year 6. Similarly, this provisional information indicates that the proportion of disadvantaged pupils attaining the expected level in writing and mathematics has also risen considerably.

- The proportion of pupils in Year 1 who achieved the expected standard in phonics had been at least in line with national figures until 2017 when it fell below. Leaders have quickly addressed this decline. Provisional information for 2018 shows an improvement in the proportion of pupils who have achieved the expected standard. Indications are that the proportion of disadvantaged pupils reaching this standard has also improved and they have diminished the difference between themselves and others.
- As a result of strong leadership and effective provision, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress from their starting points.
- Despite the quality of teaching and learning being good, there are occasions when the level of challenge in lessons is too low for the most able pupils. This is particularly evident in reading and writing. As a result, the most able do not consistently achieve the outcomes they are capable of.

Early years provision

Good

- Children, including disadvantaged children and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, get off to a good start in early years. This is because staff assess their needs quickly and accurately, and plan activities that are well-matched to their individual needs. As a result, children who enter the early years classes with skills that are lower than others, make good progress.
- Leadership of the early years is strong. Leaders and teachers work and plan well together to ensure that children have similar experiences to develop their skills and knowledge, both inside and outdoors. An example of this is found in the consistent approach to the teaching of phonics across both settings.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. Adults are appropriately trained and have all received paediatric first-aid training. Clear procedures are in place to deal with any concerns. Children are aware of health and safety issues. This was seen where a child who was preparing a pretend bonfire made a point of warning others of the possible dangers, and then built a safety barrier from crates to ensure that no one would be injured.
- Children's behaviour is good. They are keen to help each other and they play and learn well together, and take turns and listen carefully to one another.
- Although diminishing, there is still a difference between the proportion of disadvantaged children and other children nationally who attain a good level of development. Leaders work tirelessly to eliminate these differences. For example, they are currently focusing on supporting pupils who join the nursery class with poor communication skills.
- Parents speak highly of early years. They say that their children 'come on in leaps and bounds'. Parents enjoy using the online learning journal and adding photos and

comments of their own. They also welcome being given the opportunity to come into school every day to read with their children. Leaders have successfully increased parental involvement. For example, parents are invited to attend a weekly reading course to help them when reading at home with their children.

School details

Unique reference number	116487
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10046380

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	393 (plus 75 nursery children)
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alexander Speight
Executive Headteacher	Mrs Brenda Schouller
Telephone number	02392 375 488
Website	www.st-pauls.portsmouth.sch.uk
Email address	school_admin@st-pauls.portsmouth.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 April 2015

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of SEN or an education, health and care plan is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school has an on-site nursery for two- to four-year-olds. There are 75 pupils who attend the nursery, some on a full-time basis.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out observations of learning in all year groups. Many of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised documents, including: minutes of governing body meetings; the school's self-evaluation; the development plan; monitoring and assessment information; school policies; behaviour and safety records; and safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, members of staff and two members of the governing body.
- Inspectors met with pupils, as well as having informal conversations with pupils during lessons and playtimes. Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about their reading habits.
- Inspectors considered 18 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including eight free-text comments. They also met with a small group of parents before school.
- Inspectors considered 45 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and two responses to the online pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Brian Macdonald, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rachel Goplen	Ofsted Inspector
Krista Dawkins	Ofsted Inspector

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