

Inspection of Alverthorpe St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided School

St Paul's Drive, Alverthorpe, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2 0BT

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 September 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and staff at St Paul's live up to their 'shine' ethos. Pupils work hard and are keen to earn a 'shine', so they can win a book in the assembly raffle. Staff expect pupils to be 'ready, respectful and safe'. They have high expectations of pupils. Pupils remember these simple rules in classrooms and on the playground. Breaktimes and lunchtimes are joyous times of the day. Play leaders make sure that there is something for everyone, from team games to dancing with friends or building in the construction area.

Pupils are happy and safe. They say that bullying is rare. If bullying did happen, they have trusted adults to whom they can talk. Pupils listen to adults. They understand and respect the need to treat everyone equally. They are kind and courteous.

Staff are keen to develop pupils' talents and interests. Last year, they offered over 40 school clubs. These included clubs for karate and golf, which were extremely popular. Pupils enjoy the chance to get involved in competitions. They know how to stay healthy. Every child in Year 2 gets the chance to play a musical instrument.

Parents and carers speak highly of the school. Parents who responded to Ofsted's inspection survey said that they would recommend the school to others.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Senior leaders have created an ambitious curriculum. The curriculum covers a broad range of subjects. Reading is at the heart of the new curriculum. Books are carefully chosen to link with different subjects. Leaders have mapped out the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn for each subject from Nursery to Year 6.

Leaders have identified the key vocabulary they want pupils to know and remember. Some subject leaders are now checking how well this is working. In design and technology, for example, the number of key words has been reduced. This change is helping pupils to remember the important vocabulary they need in order to be successful. Some curriculum leaders are new to the school or their role. They have not had an opportunity to monitor how well their subject is doing. This means that they are not clear about the refinements needed to improve their subject.

Reading is a strength of the school. Leaders make reading and phonics a high priority. At St Paul's, pupils are never more than a few steps away from a book recommendation or review. Pupils enjoy their daily story time. Phonics teaching begins in the first week of Reception. Staff are experts in teaching phonics. Leaders make sure that all staff are well trained. Staff have strong subject knowledge. Teachers make sure that the books pupils read match the sounds that they know. Staff listen to the weakest readers every day. This helps pupils to become better readers.

Staff use assessment effectively to find any gaps pupils have in their learning. They use this information to make changes to lessons to help pupils succeed. Pupils enjoy the weekly learning quizzes. They say that this helps them to remember the curriculum. For example, during the inspection, pupils could remember the legacy of other periods studied in history. This helped them to understand the new learning about Ancient Greece. In mathematics, they value the 'flashback' checks of previous lessons. They say songs and rhymes help them to remember key information too. Subjects are well planned over time. In art, Year 4 pupils practised using colour to explore different media to help them in their 'Andy Warhol' pop-art session. Pupils talk confidently about the style of the artist and the techniques they used.

In Nursery, staff teach children to use their 'magnet eyes' to show that they are listening to the teacher. Helpful routines such as these continue through school. Children get off to a strong start in early years. They play and learn well together. Staff model clear, simple language for all children. Staff know the next steps in learning for individual children. They are quick to identify children who need extra help. These children get that help quickly to become more confident.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) participate fully in school life. Nothing is too much trouble for staff to ensure that the needs of these pupils are being met. Leaders are passionate that all pupils get the right help at the right time.

Pupils enjoy opportunities to take on roles and responsibilities, such as those of assembly monitors and sports leaders. Sport is used to help pupils recall fundamental British values. They know about democracy through voting for sports captains. They know about tolerance through sports competitions. Collective worship helps pupils to understand these values alongside the school's Christian values.

Governors and staff are proud to be part of the school community. They rate leaders very highly. They say that leaders are sympathetic to their workload concerns. Staff access high-quality training and the latest educational research. They value the coaching opportunities from their colleagues.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff are well trained in all areas of safeguarding. Staff value the 'safeguarding question of the week'. This raises awareness of safeguarding issues for all staff. Leaders know the risks children may encounter in the local area. They work well with different agencies. For example, one local agency runs an anxiety workshop to help parents. Recruitment and induction procedures are thorough. Leaders record these checks with accuracy.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They are particularly knowledgeable about online safety and any potential risks. One pupil said, 'Giving away information online is like leaving your front door wide open.'

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders are new to their roles and have not had an opportunity to monitor their subject. This means that they are not able to evaluate the effectiveness of their curriculum for pupils. Leaders should ensure that there are robust systems in place for subject leaders to monitor their curriculum areas.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	108253
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10241143
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	273
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pauline Hilling-Smith
Headteacher	Lee Swift
Website	www.alverthorpestpauls.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 and 28 November 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a voluntary-aided school in the Diocese of Leeds. The diocese completed the most recent section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools of this school on 3 June 2019. The timescales for reinspection have been extended in the light of the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The school offers a breakfast club and several after-school clubs.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders from the school, four members of the governing body (including the chair of governors), a representative from the diocese and a representative from Wakefield local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, art and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lesson visits and at breaktimes. Pupils shared their views on behaviour in discussions.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, including the single central record. Discussions with staff and pupils were held to check their understanding of safeguarding.
- The views of parents were sought face to face, and inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff from meeting with staff and from the responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors held meetings with the special educational needs coordinator to consider the curriculum for pupils with SEND.

Inspection team

Ian Clennan, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gill Holland	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Madden	Ofsted Inspector

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