

Inspection of a good school: St Paul's C of E Primary School, Leamington Spa

Upper Holly Walk, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV32 4JZ

Inspection dates:

4 and 5 October 2022

Outcome

St Paul's C of E Primary School, Leamington Spa continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

'We are all equally important, listened to and loved by God' is the motto at the heart of St Paul's C of E Primary School. This is evident in all that leaders, staff and pupils do to welcome and support the whole school community. One parent shared the views of many by saying, 'I feel certain that my child's well-being is at the forefront of everything they do.'

This is an inclusive school, where all pupils are fully involved in everything that the school does. From training as sports leaders, to joining a range of clubs, to taking part in language days with a local university, there is plenty on offer. Pupils get off to a good start when they join the school and continue to achieve well throughout their time here.

Pupils say that they always feel safe in school. They understand what bullying is and say that it hardly ever happens. If it does, staff quickly put a stop to it.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They build good relationships with teachers, leaders and staff. One pupil said that the teachers are the best part of the school: 'Teachers are lovely to people, and they respect how we feel.'

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

Children in the early years get off to a good start at St Paul's C of E Primary School. They listen carefully to their teachers and follow instructions. They enjoy learning in all areas of the calm, well-organised environment. For example, children role playing outside set up a train, with the train driver counting the number of passengers. Indoors, children delight in playing in a shop and writing shopping lists with their teacher. In Nursery, teachers develop children's love of stories and rhymes. Children learn to listen to sounds in the environment. As a result, children are ready to start learning to read as soon as they move into Reception.

Leaders have written a systematic programme for the teaching of phonics. They use assessments to identify children at risk of falling behind. Leaders quickly put in extra support for these pupils. However, there are some inconsistencies in the way that some staff deliver the intended phonics programme. Leaders are aware of this. They have commissioned support to help them to train staff to implement a new systematic synthetic phonics programme as soon as possible.

Leaders have an ambitious vision for the curriculum. They want all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to leave the school with all the skills and knowledge they need. In some subjects, such as mathematics, leaders have very clearly set out the knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which they should learn it. Teachers value this. However, this is not yet consistently in place in all year groups within some subjects. In some subjects, leaders have not identified the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. As a result, teachers are not able to ensure that pupils' learning builds within the topics they are studying.

Leaders and staff work together to identify any pupils who may have SEND. These pupils receive appropriate support. This helps them to access the curriculum fully, alongside their classmates. Some pupils also receive specialist support from well-trained staff in school. This enables pupils with SEND to achieve well.

Leaders also have an ambitious vision for pupils' personal development. They plan a range of clubs and opportunities for all. For example, pupils have met with a local Member of Parliament and a United Nations adviser. Pupils attend residential trips. A dentist visits to talk to children about how to keep their teeth healthy and clean. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about local historical events and current news stories around the world. Through the school's 'One World' link, pupils have formed connections with a school in Sierra Leone. Pupils learn about difference and tolerance. All pupils can apply for responsibilities in school by completing job application forms. All pupils can vote for school councillors.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. For example, pupils enter the hall for assembly in a polite, orderly way. Pupils training to be sports leaders listen carefully to the visiting instructors.

Staff feel fully supported by leaders and those responsible for governance. They know that they are listened to and that leaders are mindful of their workload. Staff say that leaders 'go above and beyond' to look after them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding is a priority. Leaders ensure that staff receive regular training. All staff report concerns, no matter how small, using the agreed processes.

Leaders engage with external agencies where additional support is needed. They are not afraid to challenge when they feel a decision puts a child or family at risk. They follow up all concerns tenaciously.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, for example when they are online. Leaders also ensure that they consider local risks and concerns. They invite in local experts to deliver specific safety training to pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, in some year groups, leaders have not identified the key content that pupils need to learn and the order in which this should be taught. As a result, some learning is not consistently sequenced in a way to help pupils build on what they already know or prepare for what they will learn next. Leaders should ensure that, in these subjects and year groups, they identify precisely what pupils should know and remember so that pupils can build on what they learn.
- There are some small inconsistencies in the delivery of the current phonics programme. As a result, a small number of pupils, including those with SEND, are not learning to read as effectively as they could. Leaders should ensure that the current phonics scheme is fully understood by all staff so that it can be delivered consistently and in line with leaders' high expectations, and they should ensure that their new scheme is also implemented effectively.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2017.

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	125701
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10240691
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	322
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Richard Coxon
Headteacher	Caroline Newell
Website	www.saintpaulsschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Paul's C of E Primary School is designated as having a religious character.
- A section 48 inspection was carried out by the diocese in November 2017. The school was graded outstanding.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector carried out deep dives into these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans where they were available, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to pupils read.
- The inspector also spoke to subject leaders about some other subjects.

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspector held meetings with the chair and representatives of the governing body.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around the school and at lunchtime. The inspector spoke to pupils about pupils' behaviour.
- To evaluate safeguarding, the inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead, looked at the single central record of recruitment checks, looked at safeguarding records and talked to pupils and staff.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parent free-text responses. The inspector also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspector talked to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Rachel Henrick, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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