

Inspection of a good school: St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

St Paul's Terrace, Holgate, York, North Yorkshire YO24 4BJ

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 March 2023

Outcome

St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy coming to school and learning with their friends. Pupils are polite, respectful and friendly to each other and to adults. The school is a welcoming place to be. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging.

Pupils behave well and are kind to each other. Bullying is not tolerated. Pupils trust that staff will help them if they are worried.

Pupils speak knowledgeably about modern Britain and its values. They have a strong understanding of equality and fairness.

Leaders and teachers have high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers plan lessons that encourage all pupils to contribute well. Pupils say learning is fun.

Senior leaders and staff are highly respected by parents and carers. Parents have several opportunities to see how the school is helping their children to develop academically and personally. Many parents attend musical events and have opportunities to join their children working in school. This is a school that is at the heart of its community.

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

Leaders have made sure the curriculum is carefully sequenced from Reception to Year 6. They have designed a well-organised curriculum that develops pupils' knowledge and expertise across a broad range of subjects. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND follow the same curriculum as others. Adults provide them with effective support to enable them to learn well.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading across the school. High-quality phonics teaching helps children in Reception and pupils in key stage 1 to quickly learn letters and the sounds they represent. Books are well matched to the sounds pupils know. Those pupils who find phonics and reading more difficult get expert support to help them keep up. Adults spot errors quickly. They make sure important words and sounds are practised throughout the day. This helps pupils recall words and sounds quickly and read fluently.

Pupils enjoy the many books available to them in the school library and in their class reading corners. All pupils took part in a sponsored read at home to collect money to buy more books. They are looking forward to choosing new books for the school. Pupils told inspectors that 'reading gives you a place to go and supports your imagination.'

Pupils' learning in mathematics is strong. Pupils use their 'early bird' activities to practise number skills at the start of each day. Teachers use clear explanations and check learning swiftly to help pupils learn well. In other subjects, pupils enjoy the 'wow factor' activities that teachers use to introduce aspects of the wider curriculum. However, teachers do not assess some subject knowledge precisely in foundation subjects. As a result, staff do not routinely provide opportunities for pupils to extend their learning further in these subjects.

All children settle quickly into the early years because of the care and attention adults give them. Children know they belong and they will be listened to by adults. Children are attentive, respectful and cooperate well together. Indoor and outdoor learning are well planned, with a wide range of activities to support learning. For example, resources in class and the outdoor area are designed well to help children understand how to select different numbers that add up to 10. Staff provide children, including those with SEND, with the time they need to answer questions at length. This helps to develop effective communication skills.

Pupils know that leaders and staff expect them to be kind and work together as a family. As a result, behaviour in class and at social times is exceptionally positive. No one is left alone at break or lunchtime. Older pupils take responsibility for supporting younger pupils. Pupils respect each other's differences and get along well together. Leaders arrange a wide range of activities, such as musical events, sporting activities and educational visits. Leaders have taken action to improve levels of attendance. However, despite leaders' best efforts, attendance is lower than it should be for some pupils.

Leaders and governors consider staff workload in all they do. Extra time is given for staff and subject leaders to plan and develop the curriculum. Staff appreciate the care, attention and support that leaders provide. Leaders provide staff with professional development opportunities to meet their career aspirations. Governors check the effectiveness of the school regularly. They make sure the school's vision is brought to life for pupils and parents.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff are vigilant and well trained in how to keep pupils safe. The leaders' mantra is that 'it can happen here', and staff report any small concerns they have. Staff are given scenarios of potential safeguarding incidents in training. They gain experience in deciding what should be done if an incident occurs. Leaders work with parents and external agencies to make sure children are safe. Governors and leaders make thorough checks on the suitability of adults who work in the school.

Pupils learn how to ride bicycles safely. They learn how to stay safe when online, and they know how to report any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of foundation subjects, teachers do not use assessment well to deepen pupils' learning. Therefore, opportunities are sometimes missed to extend pupils' learning in these subjects. This means that pupils are not reaching leaders' ambitious goals in those subjects. Subject leaders should ensure that staff are using the most effective strategies to assess and extend pupils' knowledge further in some foundation subjects.
- Despite leaders' actions, rates of absence and persistent absence for some pupils remain too high. This means these pupils miss out on valuable learning and social opportunities. Leaders, including governors, should continue to work with these families to strengthen attendance and attitudes to school.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2013.

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	121474
Local authority	York
Inspection number	10255820
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tom Mitchell
Headteacher	Christie Waite
Website	www.stpaulsprimaryyork.com
Date of previous inspection	8 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher started maternity leave in November 2022. In her absence, the school is being led by an acting headteacher.
- The substantive headteacher took part in the inspection, attending the school for the two days.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school 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.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the acting headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders. The inspector held discussions with governors, including the chair of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese of York.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with curriculum

leaders, 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 some pupils read.

- The inspector reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation, including the single central record of recruitment checks. He met with the designated safeguarding leader to check how leaders record and respond to safeguarding concerns. He checked the safeguarding and welfare requirements for children in the early years. He spoke with staff about safeguarding and child protection. The inspector spoke to pupils about safety and how they learn to stay safe.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour throughout the two days. He spoke to pupils about their views on behaviour in school. The inspector considered how the school supports pupils' personal development.
- The inspector spoke with a number of parents at the end of the first day of inspection. He analysed responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector met with pupils and staff to consider their views. He analysed staff's and pupils' survey responses.

Inspection team

Jim McGrath, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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 <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023