

St Paul's with St Michael's Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 100269 |
| Local Authority | Hackney |
| Inspection number | 276280 |
| Inspection dates | 21–22 November 2006 |
| Reporting inspector | Peter Sudworth |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | 185 |
| School | |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Rev Dr A Everett |
| Headteacher | Mrs D Whittaker |
| Date of previous school inspection | 15 January 2001 |
| School address | 57A Brougham Road Hackney London E8 4PB |
| Telephone number | 020 7254 1927 |
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils come from predominantly low socio-economic backgrounds with a wide variety of ethnicity and cultures. Attainment on entry is below expectations because many are not fluent in English and just over half speak English as an additional language. A much higher percentage of pupils than nationally are entitled to free school meals and currently a larger proportion than usual have learning difficulties or disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

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| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. This judgement is not as high as that in the school's own evaluation because not all pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well enough. This is partly the result of staffing difficulties, but also due to weaknesses in assessment. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, but is too variable. Some teaching is good, especially in the Foundation Stage. There are strengths in pupils' personal development, the care that staff give to pupils and in the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage, all of which are good. Parents strongly support the school and are appreciative of the good care taken of their children. The leadership and management are satisfactory, with strengths. The headteacher provides calm and effective leadership and forms a good working partnership with the senior management team. Together, they have shown much determination in overcoming staffing difficulties, including recruitment problems. However, subject leaders do not focus closely enough on improving pupils' achievement by the end of Year 2.

Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. Standards are broadly average overall. The children get off to a good start in the Nursery where good teaching results in many making good progress in learning English. However, their communication skills are still below expectations by the start of Year 1. The positive relationships in the Foundation Stage, combined with well chosen activities, support the children's good achievement. They make particularly good progress in becoming independent, working with others, and in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected level in Year 2 in the last few years has generally been falling in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are below average. By contrast there is a better picture in Year 6. The school exceeded its targets in 2006, particularly in mathematics. Year 6 results have improved in the last two years in English, mathematics and science and standards are close to the national average.

This is a happy school which pupils enjoy, shown by their improving attendance which is now above the national average. Staff work hard to create a nurturing and supportive atmosphere where all are valued. However, teachers do not always match work effectively in lessons to pupils' needs, especially for more able pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are mostly good. Most pupils behave well in class and concentrate on their learning. Pupils undertake any responsibilities well. The curriculum is satisfactory and developing further as better links are made between subjects. The good provision for pupils' personal education ensures that pupils know how to live healthily and safely. Pupils respond well by taking part enthusiastically in the extra-curricular sporting provision. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection and the school has a sound capacity for further improvement. Pupils are provided with a solid foundation for the next stage of their education and with good personal skills for life.

What the school should do to improve further

- Address the weaknesses in assessment and the monitoring of pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 in order to reverse the fall in the percentage of pupils who reach expectations in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Iron out inconsistencies in the quality of teaching so that more is good. In particular, ensure greater consistency in matching work to pupils' abilities in lessons throughout the school, particularly with regard to the more able pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievements are satisfactory and standards broadly average overall. Children's skills are close to expectations in most aspects of their work when they transfer from Reception to Year 1 but are still below in their communication and personal and emotional development. The steady improvement in results at Year 6 in the last two years from a low point in 2004 has resulted from better monitoring of individual pupils' progress and more effective intervention when pupils do not make enough progress. Overall, results in Year 6 in 2006 were above those locally, and close to the national average.

Percentages of pupils reaching the expected level by the end of Year 2 have fallen in writing, reading and mathematics in recent years. However, some success at the higher level in writing had meant that overall attainment in writing had shown a consistent improvement until 2006. The fall is in part due to staffing difficulties. It is also because teachers have been uncertain when judging the level of pupils' work and planning their pupils' next steps in learning. In 2006 results were below both local and national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. There are no major differences in the overall progress of boys and girls but British and Black African pupils, especially boys, make the best progress whilst mixed-race pupils generally do less well. Pupils with learning difficulties make similar rates of progress to other pupils. The progress made by more able pupils is satisfactory over time, but varies from class to class in lessons because of inconsistencies in the quality of challenges provided.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development, is good. Most pupils behave well, but there have been four temporary exclusions. Pupils form good relationships with pupils in their class from a diverse range of backgrounds. One commented, 'Although it is a church school, there are many children from other religions as well and we are all good friends'. Pupils talk proudly about their heritage and celebrate well the cultural and linguistic diversity within the school. Pupils adopt safe practices because these are promoted effectively by staff. They have a good understanding of healthy living and participate in a range of sports and physical activities. They are aware of environmental issues, for example, the school council is involved in contributing to plans for improving the sporting facilities in the local park.

Pupils have a satisfactory range of class and school responsibilities and they carry these out conscientiously. They are proud of the playground friends system where they support other pupils, especially the younger ones. They make a good contribution to the community through fund-raising for charities, such as 'Children in Need'. Their links with a local bank are successful and give pupils some understanding of the world of commerce. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education and their future as life-long learners. Their personal and social skills are good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils often make good progress in practical lessons as seen in a Year 5 science lesson where pupils tested each others' pulses before and after exercise. Teaching in the Nursery is a major

strength because of the carefully chosen learning activities. Skilful interweaving of different aspects of work gives these children a well-rounded foundation preparing them effectively for future learning. Teaching is also good in the Reception class.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively. Lessons are prepared well but they do not always enthuse the pupils. Questioning of pupils is satisfactory but in some lessons too many questions are asked of individuals. Consequently not all pupils are involved in working out an answer or contribute to discussion. In some lessons the same activities are given to the whole class, including the more able pupils, and where this occurs they are under-challenged. The sharing of learning intentions with pupils is variable. In the best practice they are explained well and reviewed at the end of lessons. Teachers have satisfactory skills in using interactive white boards. The pace and interest of lessons pick up dramatically when these are used well. Teachers' marking of pupils' English work in Years 3 to 6 often helps pupils to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The provision in the Nursery and Reception classes is a real strength. Particularly noteworthy is the way that young children with English as an additional language progress because the activities help develop their language. Throughout the school the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is satisfactory. It is good for pupils with specific disabilities because of the professional support obtained for them. However, curriculum planning does not always help teachers pitch work at different levels.

Good use is made of visits to local museums, such as the Jeffrey Museum, and visitors with particular expertise, such as a resident artist, theatre groups and musicians. The curriculum enhances pupils' cultural development well through visits to the opera and focused weeks such as Black History week. A good range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in tennis and other sports, enhance the opportunities for pupils. A good structure of activities is developing for pupils' personal, social and health education. Some good use is made of information and communication technology to enable pupils to research their studies. However, opportunities are missed to use class computers to help with their work in different subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support for pupils are good. The school places much importance on support for personal development so that each individual pupil feels safe and happy. Child protection arrangements are effective and meet all requirements. Health and safety issues are addressed and risk assessments are carried out regularly. The school liaises closely with a range of service providers to ensure good care for all pupils, including those most at risk. Pupils' progress is tracked effectively. Their specific needs are identified and this information is used well to plan appropriate support programmes, particularly for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Assessment of pupils' work in English produces carefully chosen individual learning targets for pupils, which assist their progress. Their mathematics targets are less effective because they do not relate to individuals sufficiently well.

The induction for children into the Nursery and Reception is thoughtfully planned, as is the support given to those pupils who join the school at other stages. The vast majority of parents are very appreciative of the school's work. One parent said, 'As a family, we do not belong to

the same religious denomination as the school, but have always felt appreciated, and welcomed to the school

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Ably supported by the senior management team, the headteacher has developed and fostered very good relationships and teamwork amongst the staff and between staff, parents and governors. She has successfully established a good induction programme for new teachers, which helps them to settle in quickly, maintaining the pupils' education when staff changes occur. Carefully structured monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning give a clear view of strengths and weaknesses. This has not always reaped full benefits for the school because of staff changes.

Generous staffing has been used effectively to provide extensive support programmes, such as literacy and mathematics tutorials for pupils. These have contributed to improved standards at the end of Year 6. Nevertheless, subject leaders have not been effective enough in improving standards at the end of Year 2 to halt the downward trend of pupils reaching the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics.

The governing body is satisfactory. It is well organised with a good committee structure. Governors are supportive of the school's work and are beginning to gain a better knowledge of the school's strengths and its areas for development. They review the progress of the improvement plan through committee processes and so keep abreast of developments.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall |
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Overall effectiveness

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 3 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |

Achievement and standards

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|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 3 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 3 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 3 |

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |

The quality of provision

| | |
|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 3 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 |

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3 |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets | 3 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 3 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures? | No |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No |

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for your very warm welcome when we visited your school and for talking to us about your work and what you do. We very much enjoyed our visit. Your school is a happy one and you enjoy coming to it. Your attendance is better than in most schools. Your behaviour and interest in school are good. You understand clearly the importance of keeping yourselves safe and how to live healthily. You take a good interest in the area around you. We were interested to learn of your ideas for Haggerston Park. The staff take very good care of you.

The school provides a satisfactory education for you. Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes where those who do not speak much English when they first begin school quickly learn to speak it. In the school as a whole, some lessons are good and some satisfactory. We would like more lessons to be good. Sometimes the work is not difficult enough for those of you who find learning easier than other pupils do. You make satisfactory progress in the main, and some of you make good progress in reaching the levels that you do. Some pupils in Years 1 and 2 could make better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The range of work that you do in class is satisfactory. You clearly enjoy the extra opportunities that the staff kindly offer you after school and you take part in these enthusiastically. We were particularly interested in the tennis coaching you receive from Year 1 upwards.

The headteacher and senior staff work hard to make school life interesting and they help new teachers who join the school to settle in quickly and to know the school's routines. We feel that the senior staff and subject leaders now need to concentrate on the progress of those of you in Years 1 and 2 so that you produce better work. Some of you can help in this by trying even harder.

We wish you all well for the future and hope that you will work hard to achieve your ambitions.

With very best wishes,

Mr P Sudworth

(Lead inspector)