



# St Paul's C of E Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 108502  
**LEA** Newcastle upon Tyne  
**Inspection number** 277988  
**Inspection dates** 4 July 2006 to 5 July 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Gillian Salter-Smith

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Victoria Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Newcastle upon Tyne
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Tyne and Wear, NE4 7JU
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 2733667
<b>Number on roll</b>	226	<b>Fax number</b>	0191 2732584
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Reverend George Curry
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Judith Sword

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 4 July 2006 - 5 July 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 277988
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This school is average in size. A high proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals and many come from areas of significant social and economic deprivation. An above average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and of these around half are in the early stages of learning English. A small proportion of pupils are from refugee or asylum-seeking families. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Many pupils join the school at times other than the usual start at the age of four, so that by Years 5 and 6 just two thirds of the pupils have been in the school since the Nursery. A very small minority of pupils are looked after by persons other than their own family. Children start school in the Nursery with very low levels of development, especially in language and communication skills and knowledge and understanding of the world.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Paul's Church of England Primary is a good school. This view is overwhelmingly supported by parents and matches the school's evaluation of itself. The calm and determined leadership of the acting headteacher, ably supported by other leaders, ensures that the school's Christian ethos of care, support and challenge pervades all its work. Pupils make good progress throughout the school from a very low starting point when they join the school. Their achievement is good because teaching is good, and they are well cared for and supported. Standards have improved since the last inspection but they remain below average and writing is particularly weak. Basic skills are taught well in literacy lessons but there are not enough opportunities to improve writing skills in other lessons. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good because all adults have a good understanding of how children of this age learn. The outdoor play area for these pupils is not used to its full potential for learning in all areas of the curriculum.

The school works exceptionally well in partnership with parents and many other agencies to ensure that all pupils, whatever their background or needs, are helped to do their best and overcome the difficulties they may face. Relationships between adults and pupils are based on support, understanding and high expectations, and pupils grow in confidence and behave well. The school works hard to encourage good attendance and pupils enjoy school. However, attendance remains below average.

Leadership and management are good. The school knows what it does well and what it needs to improve because it has secure systems to check on its work and to identify priorities for improvement. Governors are supportive and challenging. The school has improved well in the last two years and is well placed to improve further. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards across the school, especially in writing.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to improve their writing skills in subjects across the curriculum.
- Improve the use of the outdoor areas to develop learning in all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils make good progress because they are well taught and very well cared for and supported. They improve on the very low standards they start with in Nursery, and by Year 6 they reach standards that are below average. The school's results in national tests taken by Year 6 pupils have been below average in four of the past five years and fluctuations from year to year have been the result of the proportion of pupils coming new to the school. In 2005, results in English and

mathematics were below average and the school exceeded its realistic targets for these subjects. However, the 2005 results in science were disappointing because many pupils, particularly girls, did not achieve the levels expected of them. The unconfirmed results for 2006 show improvement in English, mathematics and science and that the school has exceeded its targets. Results improved significantly in science but standards in writing continue to be a weakness. Inspection evidence indicates that although standards are higher they still remain below average overall.

The results of Year 2 national assessments of reading, writing and mathematics have been below average over the past five years. In 2005, boys' standards were much lower than girls and writing was a particular weakness. The unconfirmed results of national assessments for 2006 have improved, especially in reading and mathematics and for the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage but most children do not reach the levels of development expected for their age by the end of Reception.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those pupils who are learning English as an additional language make good progress because the support they receive is closely targeted to meet their needs.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being, including pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their personal development. Pupils throughout the school behave well and enjoy lessons. They relate well to each other and to adults. They have a good understanding about how to stay safe and healthy; many enjoy the play organised for them at lunchtimes and the wide range of sporting activities available. Incidents of bullying are rare and pupils know what to do about them. They know that incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively by adults. Pupils are very proud of their school and are eager to make it an even better place. They know that their views are taken seriously and acted upon. For example, the school council has helped to bring about improvements to playtime activities. Pupils really enjoy using the new laptops in their lessons and the many educational experiences away from the school premises. Despite doing a great deal to encourage good attendance, it remains below average. Pupils develop many social and personal skills that prepare them well for their futures, but lower than average standards in basic literacy and numeracy skills are a disadvantage for some pupils.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Trusting relationships and good humour underpin teaching. Teachers' high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning are supported

by a consistent approach to rewards and sanctions. Teachers' planning is detailed and activities in lessons interest the pupils and take them through manageable steps in learning. Teachers ask questions that make pupils think more deeply and they often tailor their questions to make individual children think carefully. Teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons is good overall. Good opportunities for structured talk amongst pupils are provided in some lessons. However, they are not frequent enough, and too little attention is paid to improving pupils' writing skills in lessons other than those for literacy. Teachers make sure that pupils know what they will learn and do in lessons and pupils enjoy the lessons when they decide how well they have succeeded against criteria they have identified for themselves. Teachers give helpful advice to pupils when they mark their work but pupils are not always expected to respond to it.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities understand the targets that guide their learning and behaviour, and they make good progress. These pupils and those learning English as an additional language benefit from well focused support from teachers and support assistants.

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is lively and challenging, and teachers keep a careful eye on how children are doing, so that they can plan demanding activities that help children to learn.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. It meets pupils' needs well and fulfils national requirements. The school responds to local needs, by establishing learning sessions for parents, for example. The curriculum for literacy and numeracy is well planned to develop pupils' basic skills, but not enough is done in other subjects to develop writing skills. Well organised personal, social and health education ensures that pupils develop good personal and social skills, and have a good understanding of how to stay healthy. Senior staff make the most of assemblies to develop pupils' spiritual awareness and to promote pupils' understanding of the school's Christian ethos. Pupils enjoy the many educational visits to interesting places that make learning more stimulating. Many pupils benefit from a wide range of clubs and activities that take place out of lesson time. The Foundation Stage curriculum provides children with a good start, but there is room for further development of learning in the outdoor areas.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Good care, guidance and support help pupils to make the most of their experiences in school. Child protection arrangements meet requirements and all the necessary checks on staff are made to ensure pupils' well-being. The school adheres strictly to local authority health and safety guidance. Pupils grow in confidence because adults working in the school show them great understanding and respect. Checks on pupils' progress help to identify those who are not achieving well and support is provided quickly. Pupils receive helpful guidance from teachers in lessons and when their work is marked. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are learning

English as an additional language benefit from the excellent links with other agencies that make sure that all pupils receive the support they need to make good progress. Parents very much appreciate the many ways the school has involved them in supporting their children's learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The acting headteacher and senior leaders lead by the positive example they set and the high standards they expect. They provide very clear educational direction and a strong determination to do all that is possible to help every pupil to achieve their best and overcome the difficulties that may hold them back from learning. A very strong Christian ethos of care and support underpins this determination and is evident throughout the school.

Rigorous systems for checking on how well pupils learn and make progress are carried out by senior and subject leaders. The checks help the school to know what it does well and to identify the right priorities for improvement. Parents and pupils are consulted regularly and the school responds well and practically to their views, such as improving the school lunches. Exceptionally strong links are forged with parents, who are very supportive of the school. Further training for teachers is well targeted towards the school's priorities for improvement and is successful in raising standards. For example, a recent focus on improving the teaching of investigative skills and scientific vocabulary has resulted in a significant rise in the most recent Year 6 test results for science.

The governing body is well informed and very supportive. Governors pose challenging questions to senior leaders to make sure that the school is doing all it can to support pupils' achievement and well-being. Financial management is secure. A large surplus is gradually being reduced and spent wisely on improvements to accommodation and resources.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

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

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London

WC2B 6SE

T 0207 421 6800

F 0207 421 6707

Ofsted helpline

08456 404045

To the pupils of:

St Paul's CofE Primary School

Victoria Street

Newcastle upon Tyne

Tyne and Wear

NE4 7JU

4 July 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for your warm and friendly welcome. We enjoyed seeing you at work in lessons and we were very interested in all that you had to tell us about your school. We came to your school to find out how the school is helping you to do well in your work and become sensible and caring young people. We report our findings to your parents or carers, the headteacher and governors, and to the government. It is important that you know what we found out.

You are right to be proud of your school. It is a good school that has a Christian atmosphere where everyone is cared for and supported very well. You get on well with each other and with adults, and your behaviour is good. The staff work very hard with your parents or carers and many other people to make sure that every one of you is happy in school and able to do their best. You enjoy school and your lessons because teachers make them interesting and challenging. Most of you make good progress and achieve well in your work. Some of you find writing difficult. We have asked your teachers to give you more practice of writing in interesting ways when you are doing your work in other lessons, not only in literacy. Your headteacher, the staff and the governors are determined that your school will get even better. One of the many ways in which they are making changes for the better is the plan they have for improving how the youngest children play and learn when they are outdoors.

You can help by continuing to work hard and by using your school council to put forward your sensible ideas about how to improve the school even more than you do now. We hope that you continue to enjoy your time at St Paul's School and we wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Salter-Smith

Additional Inspector