



# St Paul's CofE (C) Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 124299  
**LEA** Staffordshire  
**Inspection number** 281685  
**Inspection dates** 3 July 2006 to 3 July 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Doris Bell AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Garden Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Stafford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Staffordshire ST17 4BT
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01785 356634
<b>Number on roll</b>	113	<b>Fax number</b>	01785 356634
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	David Brown
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Nicholas Bickley

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a small school with small numbers in each year group. Attainment on entry is usually as expected for the children's ages and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is broadly average. The proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average. In the past two years, the school has had a new management team and one year group has had a considerable turnover of staff.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory, as are the pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching, leadership and management. Standards are broadly average in Year 6 and the test results show that they are above average in Year 2 this year (2006). Good teaching in Years 5 and 6 is successfully beginning to close previous gaps in pupils' learning caused by instability in staffing in Years 3 and 4. The key issue from the previous inspection has been adequately tackled and the school has the capacity to improve further. The school's own evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate and it provides satisfactory value for money.

In the Foundation Stage, standards and progress are good, as is the quality of provision. The school is dealing with the restricted access to outdoor learning. The school is working hard, and with some success, to improve standards in writing, information and communication technology (ICT) and numeracy. However, there are few opportunities for pupils in any age group to develop these skills in different subjects. Attainment targets are displayed in all classes but their usefulness is limited. They are not broken down sufficiently to help individual pupils see what they need to do to improve, and teachers' marking rarely makes this clear. The headteacher and key staff are getting better at monitoring teaching and learning but governors are not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring the school's progress towards its targets. The school's priorities for improvement are not precisely enough stated to enable them to do so.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their extended writing and ICT skills in all subjects and to use and apply mathematical skills better in problem-solving activities.
- Clarify for each pupil the steps needed to reach their targets and ensure that teachers' marking refers to them and helps to improve pupils' progress.
- Identify specific weaknesses more precisely in the school improvement plan and establish greater rigour in the way the school's progress towards its targets is monitored.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards in English and mathematics are broadly average. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and a large majority reach the standards expected at the end of Reception. The good progress continues in Key Stage 1. Standards dropped in Year 2 in 2005 because of the unique make-up of the year group but they have improved considerably in 2006. Standards were broadly average in Year 6 in 2005 after a period of steady decline in previous years. Early indications are that they have been maintained in English but have declined in mathematics. In last year's Year 6, as in the rest of Key Stage 2, although learning

has improved recently, the legacy of underachievement due to instability in staffing is still evident in the pupils' work. The school is working very hard to address the knock-on effect this has had on Years 5 and 6. It did not meet its challenging targets for Year 6 in 2005 or 2006. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels is below average but improvements in teachers' planning and their use of assessment data is beginning to address this. The targets set for pupils in Year 2 were exceeded in reading, writing and mathematics.

Boys do much better than girls in Year 2 but the difference is not significant by Year 6. Standards in reading are better than in writing. By Year 6, mathematics is the weakest subject of all. The school is receiving support to help it tackle these issues and improvement is evident in Year 5. More able pupils, vulnerable pupils, those with learning difficulties and the small number who are learning to speak English all make satisfactory progress.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. Personal development is good in the Foundation Stage. Throughout the school, pupils behave well, enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. Their attendance is satisfactory.

Pupils know that it is important to eat healthily and take regular exercise and a good number take part in the after-school sports activities. They feel safe because they work in a caring environment where they successfully learn to respect each other. They report confidently that the school deals effectively with any form of harassment and that they can always turn to someone for help should they need it. Older pupils help younger ones but, beyond this, pupils have few opportunities to take responsibility or show initiative. The demise of the school council, although there are plans to revive it, means that pupils do not have an official voice in the school. Pupils know that their views, which are sought in other ways, are valued but they have few opportunities to contribute directly to improving their school. They make a satisfactory contribution to the community, through, for example, fundraising activities. Their good social skills and their satisfactory personal and academic progress mean that they are adequately prepared for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is satisfactory overall and it is good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Children in those age groups make good progress. Throughout the school, the teachers' high expectations of pupils' behaviour are met well. Where teaching is good, this accelerates the pace of learning, particularly when the teacher sets challenging time limits for different activities.

Recent improvements in teachers' planning mean that pupils' work is usually satisfactorily matched to their levels of capability. More able pupils benefit from working alongside pupils in older year groups. Pupils with learning difficulties and those who are vulnerable, for whatever reason, receive good support from well briefed teaching assistants. However, teachers rarely include these pupils' individual targets in their planning, thereby missing valuable opportunities to link them to clearly displayed class targets. Additionally, teachers do not break the class targets down for individual pupils into small steps. This is needed so that pupils can measure their progress for themselves. Teachers' marking is not always helpful in this respect either. It rarely refers to the targets other than by a stamp that indicates whether the pupil is working towards or has achieved the target. Comments giving pointers for specific improvement are seldom made. Nevertheless, teachers use their good knowledge of individual pupils well to ensure they make at least satisfactory progress in lessons and to plan the next stage of their learning.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' needs are adequately met by a satisfactory curriculum that is suitably enriched by a good range of activities, visits and visitors in and outside the normal school day. The two-year cycle successfully ensures adequate coverage of all subjects and aspects, including personal, social and health education. However, the curriculum does not provide enough guidance for teachers about how to promote writing, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects. The school does its best to promote healthy lifestyles but the inadequacy of the accommodation limits the provision for physical education. A lack of outdoor provision limits the otherwise good provision in the Foundation Stage. Both issues are due to be resolved as part of the imminent building project.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The satisfactory care, guidance and support given to pupils ensures that they work and play in a safe, secure learning environment. Child protection and health and safety aspects are given due attention. Initiatives such as the 'social group' time help anxious and vulnerable pupils to deal with their concerns. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is satisfactory. Recent improvements mean that the pupils' individual progress is adequately tracked and analysed and they are given clear, measurable targets. However, these targets are not fully incorporated into teachers' planning to ensure the best possible progress. Pupils' academic support and guidance is satisfactory. However, pupils do not always know what they need to do to reach the broad class targets. Teachers' marking is not helpful enough in this respect, and pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing their own progress.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Satisfactory leadership and management have brought the school successfully through a period of instability during which the leadership team changed and the school dealt with some inadequate teaching. Despite this, the school retained its caring ethos. The good links it has with other agencies contribute to the satisfactory progress made by pupils who find learning difficult.

Governors know the school well. They contribute satisfactorily to school improvement planning. The school's evaluation of its own work is accurate and shows that it knows what it needs to do to improve. As a result of it, the systems for monitoring teaching and learning are becoming increasingly more robust. They have contributed to improvements in teachers' planning and the procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress, showing that the school has dealt satisfactorily with the one key issue from the last inspection. It has made good use of the local authority's support services to do this. All of this is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' learning. It seeks the views of parents and pupils to help evaluate its performance and determine its priorities and they, in turn, are highly satisfied. The priorities in the school improvement plan are the right ones but they are not clear or specific enough to enable progress towards them to be rigorously monitored. Nevertheless, the actions that the leaders and managers have taken have contributed to the improvement seen so far. This gives the school the capacity to improve.

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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>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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>	3	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	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	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	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	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>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	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>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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**

Thank you for making us so welcome and for talking to us about yourselves and your work. Here are some of the things we found that were good about your school:

You are secure and happy at school, you clearly enjoy learning, and you and your parents are satisfied with what the school does for you.

You behave well in lessons and around the school.

You rightly trust your teachers and the headteacher to help you if you have a problem and they do this well.

You know how to keep yourselves safe and understand why it is important to keep fit and healthy.

We have asked your school to help you learn faster by:

Giving you more opportunities to use ICT and to write at length in all subjects, and helping you to get better at solving mathematical problems.

Helping each of you to understand better how to reach the targets displayed in your classrooms.

Planning more carefully, with clearer aims so that it can check how well it is doing.

We wish you well and hope that you will continue to enjoy learning more and more as you grow up.