

St Jude and St Paul's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100442
Local Authority	Islington
Inspection number	285793
Inspection dates	21–22 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Sheena MacDonald HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	198
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev David Silvester
Headteacher	Mrs Marjorie Wood
Date of previous school inspection	26 March 2001
School address	10 Kingsbury Road Islington London N1 4AZ
Telephone number	020 7254 5598
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Jude and St Paul's is similar in size to most primary schools and serves an area of high social disadvantage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is increasing and is now three times the national average. Pupils represent a wide mixture of cultural heritages with three quarters of pupils coming from minority ethnic cultures. The largest groups are Black African, White British and Black Caribbean. A very high percentage of pupils have English as an additional language. The school has high numbers of pupils with learning needs and/or disabilities (LDD). Mobility is increasing and much higher than average numbers of pupils join or leave the school throughout the year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with outstanding features. The headteacher and staff are determined to ensure that each child achieves their potential both academically and in their personal development. Not surprisingly, parents express unanimous confidence in the school. One commented, 'I feel happy when I think of my child learning in this community'. Excellent partnerships have been forged with parents, the community and a wide range of services and these have a very positive impact on pupils' all round achievement.

Pupils make good academic progress. They get off to a good start in the Reception class because of good teaching and lively learning activities. Progress is steady in Key Stage 1 and speeds up again in Key Stage 2 so that by the time pupils leave they achieve standards which are around national averages. This represents good progress, given the low starting point of many pupils and the high numbers of pupils who have had disrupted schooling. The school rightly believes that they can improve standards still further, particularly in Key Stage 1 and are implementing strategies, such as the Reading Recovery programme, which are speeding up the rate of progress. Assessment information is well used to identify aspects or groups where achievement could be better and the school is currently refining its systems for tracking pupils' progress in order to enable it to more easily measure the impact of its actions.

A key factor in the good achievement is the high priority placed on ensuring that all pupils feel safe, well cared for and valued. As a result, personal development and well being is outstanding. Pupils come to lessons keen to learn; relationships and behaviour in and out of lessons are excellent and there is an impressive sense of harmony amongst all groups of pupils. Pupils are sensible and responsible and very much active partners in their school. They are given outstanding guidance and support, are confident that their concerns will be dealt with quickly and understand clearly what they need to do to improve.

The school has suffered from recruitment and retention difficulties in the past and has worked hard to establish a talented and stable staff, some of whom are relatively new to teaching. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school and there is some outstanding practice. All staff work hard to provide interesting, well structured lessons. The curriculum is good and pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons because as they told us, 'teachers always try to make them interesting and fun.'

Leadership and management are good and the contribution of the headteacher is outstanding. There is a shared commitment across the leadership team, staff and governors to strive for continuous improvement. The school has accurately identified those areas that could be even better. However, the objectives in the improvement plan are not sharp enough for the school to accurately measure the impact of actions on pupils' attainment. The school has successfully addressed the key areas for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection and the rapid improvements seen since establishing themselves in their new building demonstrate good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards, particularly in Key Stage 1.
- Refine the assessment tracking system and sharpen the targets in the improvement plan so that the impact of actions on pupils' attainment can be more easily measured.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and by the time pupils leave the school, standards are around national averages. When children start school, many have skills which are very low compared with national expectations, particularly in social skills, communication and language. Pupils make good progress in the Reception class particularly in personal development and although standards are still below expectations they are beginning to catch up. Standards achieved in Key Stage 1 are rising but below average, particularly in writing. Standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are about average in English, and just below average in mathematics. The focus on improving teaching and learning in mathematics is having a positive impact on the quality seen in lessons and pupils' books. Standards are above average in science as a result of enthusiastic teaching and good subject leadership. Good use of assessment information is linked with well focused support for individual pupils. Strategies to improve the progress of particular groups are resulting in improvements in attitudes and achievement as indicated by the enthusiastic attendance at before and after school booster clubs. As a result all groups of pupils make good progress and the school is on track to meet its challenging targets. Tracking systems are currently being improved to enable the school to make more strategic use of assessment information and ensure they are able to measure the impact of improvements more efficiently.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Behaviour and relationships are excellent and pupils get on very well together regardless of age or ethnicity. The school highly values individuals and places a strong emphasis on building confidence and self-esteem and as a result, pupils are very proud of their many achievements. Pupils told us that, 'we feel that we can talk to our teachers about anything because they are so friendly.' They are confident that, although they can rely on staff to help them, they are learning the skills to solve problems and deal with difficulties themselves. The school has achieved Healthy School accreditation and pupils demonstrate a very good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They participate enthusiastically in physical education (PE) lessons and the many sports clubs after school. Pupils at the 'table of honour' are proud of making healthy lunch choices. Pupils thoroughly enjoy all aspects of school life. Attendance is satisfactory overall but the attendance of the vast majority of pupils is good; exclusions are exceptionally rare and rewards such as the 'Early Bird Awards' and the breakfast club have resulted in impressive improvements in punctuality.

Pupils of all ages enthusiastically and sensibly take on a wide range of responsibilities such as playground friends and reading buddies. The school's council is proud of their work which has led to improvements such as healthier school meals. There are good links with the local church and other community groups and pupils are generous with their time and money in organising and participating in fundraising events and community activities. Pupils demonstrate important skills such as collaboration and problem solving and have opportunities to learn how to manage a budget. They become well rounded young citizens with outstanding attitudes to learning and personal skills which will support their future economic well being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are well planned with careful account taken of the needs and abilities of all pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that the work meets the needs of all pupils, including pupils who are learning English. Expectations are high which result in excellent behaviour in lessons and an enthusiastic approach towards learning. The vast majority of lessons are lively, well paced and practical with good use made of the interactive whiteboards. There are good opportunities in most lessons for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills, such as regular paired discussions and in drama productions such as 'Peace Child in an African Village'. Teachers make sure pupils know exactly what they should be achieving in each lesson and provide very good feedback so that pupils know how well they are doing. Pupils are often involved in evaluating their own and other pupils' work. Several staff are new in post and the more established members of staff and specialist teachers are providing excellent role models and good support to further improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning across all classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and is well adapted to meet the needs of the school's diverse community. Provision for personal, social, health, citizenship and emotional development is strong and contributes to outstanding personal development. Teaching staff in the Foundation Stage create an exciting environment where the areas of learning are successfully linked using themes such as 'Jack and the Beanstalk' to enable children to learn in relevant and meaningful ways. Across the whole school there are some good examples of links between subjects, such as the Year 6 work on literacy linked to music, when pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. The school is developing the curriculum to make these links stronger, particularly the use of ICT skills. Specialist teaching such as music, art, physical education and ICT contributes well to the curriculum and there is good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and the gifted and talented. Visits, including residential visits, and visitors are an integral part of the curriculum. These, and focused events such as Maths fun days, add interest and enhance the learning. A good range of very popular clubs, especially the sports clubs provide many opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and celebrate achievements.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents are confident that their children are very well cared for, happy in school and making good progress. The partnership between school and home is strong. Child protection and health and safety procedures are very secure. Staff are well trained to understand the range of experiences pupils may face and better able to provide appropriate support. Systems for monitoring and supporting pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are extremely well managed. Teaching assistants play an important part in this process and are thus in a strong position to provide well focused support in class. The learning mentor, home school liaison officer and other regular visiting specialists make an important contribution to pupils' learning, personal development and safety and help to enhance parent - school relationships. Marking is consistently good and staff provide high quality academic guidance and feedback. In lessons,

pupils are involved in evaluating their progress and can talk knowledgeably about their individual targets, the quality of their work and whether they have achieved success in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The word used by staff and parents, about the headteacher's leadership is 'inspirational'. Her determination to provide a high quality education and to make sure that no talent goes undiscovered is at the heart of the school's success. Despite difficulties caused by recruiting and retaining staff in the past, the hard work of the senior team has resulted in a stable and talented staff with a remarkable sense of community and shared purpose. School leaders work well together undertaking monitoring and providing good quality support for each other and more inexperienced colleagues, and as a result the quality of teaching is good and improving. Those recently appointed to senior positions are making a very positive contribution, particularly in strong subject leadership. Their roles and responsibilities are still developing and there is potential for them to have even more impact on whole school evaluation and improvement.

The school really is at the centre of its community and has excellent links with many educational colleagues, community services and businesses and, of course, the local church. These partnerships enhance the provision and have a positive impact on the achievement of pupils. The school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and improvement planning is practical and sometimes imaginative. The links between improvement strategies and pupil progress are not always sharply focused enough to enable the school to measure the impact of different activities. The governing body provides good support and was particularly influential during the delayed transfer to the new building. It is well informed, represents all groups in the community and is now up to full strength. It is developing its ability to provide informed challenge.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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	2
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**

As you know we visited your school recently to find out how well you were doing. We really enjoyed our time with you. Thank you for being so friendly, polite and welcoming. You and your parents told us that your school is good and we agree with you. Here are some of the main things we liked about your school.

- You get on very well together, show each other respect and your behaviour is excellent. You carry out lots of responsibilities very sensibly.
- You are very safe and well cared for and everyone works hard to make sure you are very well supported especially if you need extra help.
- You get off to a good start in Reception and you carry on making good progress through the school, so that by the time you leave Year 6 you reach average standards. You are working hard with your teachers to improve your mathematics and from the work we saw, it looks like this is working. You do really well in Science.
- You told us you enjoyed your lessons and that is because your teachers and other adults plan good lessons and try to make sure they are lively and interesting. They mark your work really well. This means that you know exactly how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve your work.
- You have many opportunities to take part in lots of clubs and you told us how much you enjoyed all the different activities, especially all the sports.
- Your school leaders are good and your headteacher is excellent. She is determined to discover all your special and sometimes hidden talents. She is good at involving all sorts of people in your school and getting them working together to make sure you get a really good education.

Even though your school is good, your headteacher and the other school leaders are determined to make it even better so here's what we've asked them to do.

- Raise standards, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Keep working hard and taking part in all your lessons and you can do it!
- Improve the systems for tracking your progress and use this information to set targets for improvement which can be easily measured. Then the school will have a better idea of whether different activities are working and making a difference to your achievement.

Thank you again for helping to make our time in your school so enjoyable.

Yours sincerely, Sheena MacDonald HMI