

# St Paul's CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101326
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	286032
<b>Inspection date</b>	21 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gill Close HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	210
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Barrie Martin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Jane Shelbourn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 November 2001
<b>School address</b>	The Ridgeway Mill Hill London NW7 1QU
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8959 3412
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8906 8879

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Pupils join the school with above average attainment. Very few are eligible for free school meals. Just over half of the pupils are of White British heritage, one eighth have African heritage, one tenth have other White backgrounds and the remainder are from a range of ethnic backgrounds. One quarter of pupils speak a first language other than English, but very few are at an early stage of learning English. Average proportions of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities, or statements of special educational need.

Building works are currently underway to create additional teaching space and improved outdoor provision for Reception.

## 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 in which parents rightly have a great deal of confidence. Pupils make good progress to reach exceptionally high standards. In 2006, pupils in Key Stage 2 made outstanding progress but at Key Stage 1 there were pupils who had started school with lower attainment than in previous years and standards fell to broadly average, with some higher attainers not making good progress. The school recognised the need to improve the assessment system throughout the school so that potential underachievement was identified as soon as possible, and teaching could be better matched to these pupils' needs. It put in place support so that pupils are now making good progress and are on track to reach high standards. All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, are doing well. The good provision in Reception is stimulating and gets pupils off to a good start in school.

Through the high quality nurture and care, pupils achieve excellent personal development and well-being. There is a strong sense of community and mutual respect underpinned by the school's Christian ethos. Staff know the pupils very well. They encourage them to praise each other and share their concerns, and they take great care to ensure their health and safety. Pupils greatly enjoy coming to school.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers use a wide range of strategies and activities that engage pupils well. The school recognised a need for increased challenge for some high attainers and introduced it, but there are still occasions when pupils are not given sufficiently demanding work to secure good progress. Teachers keep thorough records of pupils' attainment on the work taught in English and mathematics but the school does not keep frequent enough records of progress against the National Curriculum levels across the breadth of subjects to facilitate the monitoring of progress and identification of any potential underachievement. The good curriculum is motivating and broad, with well-targeted support to meet individual needs.

Leadership and management are good. Staff work together well, supporting and evaluating each others' work and striving to improve. Senior and middle leaders play a full part in evaluating lessons, but sometimes this is not focused sufficiently sharply on pupils' progress to pinpoint the key areas for improvement in teaching. The school's self-evaluation draws well upon views of pupils, parents, staff and governors to reach accurate overall judgements and identify appropriate areas for development in its plans. These are sound but there is room for improvement in specifying priorities, checking impact and linking different plans. The substantial recent improvements illustrate the school's good capacity to continue to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Extend assessment against the National Curriculum levels and in Reception so that progress may be tracked more frequently and in more subjects.
- Raise teaching quality through focusing monitoring and development more closely on pupils' progress.
- Sharpen development plans, with clearer priorities and connections and measurable success criteria linked more directly to impact.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. In 2006, pupils continued the pattern of recent years by making outstanding progress during Key Stage 2 to reach exceptionally high standards. Although standards vary across year groups, pupils now in Key Stage 2 are on track to reach very high standards. In contrast, at Key Stage 1 where there were pupils who had started school with lower attainment than in previous years, standards fell to broadly average in 2006 and some higher attainers did not make good progress. The steps taken by the school since then have enabled pupils currently in Key Stage 1 to make good progress and be on their way to reaching high standards. The pupils now in the Reception class are also expected to attain high standards, but these vary slightly from year to year. In 2006, most exceeded the expected standards by the end of Reception, although some boys did not do so in all areas.

All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, do well.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. As one parent stated, and;quot;The atmosphere in the school is fantastic - the children are happy, confident and well-motivated.and;quot; There is a strong feeling of community spirit and all pupils and staff get on with each other very well in an environment of sincere mutual respect. Pupils are keen to come to school and greatly enjoy it. Attendance is now good, having improved following the school's recent successful initiative to reduce holiday absence during term time.

Pupils grow to understand their own and others' feelings very well. For example, they express concerns and praise through a 'think box' and respond to points that other pupils may raise about them. Such opportunities enable them to develop excellent moral values and a strong regard for each others' well-being. Their behaviour is exceptionally good around the school and in lessons, with only occasional instances that fall below this standard.

Pupils show a good awareness of the range of cultures in Britain. They involve themselves well in the school, church and wider community, such as through sponsored walks. Through the school council they are making an increasing contribution to decisions. The strong Christian ethos contributes to their excellent spiritual development. High standards of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, together with well-developed expertise in collaboration, prepare them extremely well for the future. Pupils have a good understanding of how to follow a healthy lifestyle. They select healthy food and drinks. Many join the after-school sports clubs.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. The good relationships between teachers and pupils, and pupils' very positive attitudes to learning, contribute to productive use of lesson time during which pupils make good progress. Teachers use a good range of teaching strategies and equipment. They plan carefully the different work they give to various groups within the class. It effectively provides access for lower attainers and those with learning difficulties or disabilities,

who also receive good support from teaching assistants. Some activities are great fun and engage pupils well, enabling them to collaborate constructively with each other. The school has rightly identified the need to further stretch the ablest pupils. It has introduced extra challenges for higher attainers that often help them to excel, but in some lessons these pupils are not given sufficiently demanding work to enable them to make good progress. There are occasions when pupils are not involved actively enough or when tasks are not presented clearly enough to secure good gains in understanding. Pupils are aware of group targets and lesson objectives but they are not always clear enough about how to demonstrate or assess their progress towards them. Pupils are well supported by their parents and complete their homework conscientiously.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. While including rich activities that enable pupils to do well in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, it also has good breadth. Pupils benefit from visits and visitors. They have good opportunities to work on long projects, such as rehearsing plays in which they all participate. They are involved in church and community events. Additional support in lessons and outside is matched well to pupils' needs. Effective links are made between subjects. Science lessons involve a high quantity of practical activity which pupils enjoy. However, there is less than the recommended amount of time allocated to physical education, and access to ICT is restricted during the current building work.

In Reception, the indoor environment is stimulating. The outdoor provision is restricted through space and access but the current building works are due to offer some improvement. The good links between Reception and Year 1 are improving pupils' transition.

There is a good choice of extra-curricular activities, in which over half of the pupils participate.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care, guidance and support for pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Parents attest to the and;quot;environment which nurtures respect for others and a community spiritand;quot;. One successful way the school encourages these is through involving pupils in nominating peers for recognition of good deeds they have done. Staff take great care to ensure pupils' health and safety, especially during the building work. They work closely with external agencies to support pupils. For pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities there are well-focused plans and frequent review meetings.

The school has correctly prioritised assessment as an area for development. Teachers know their pupils very well and keep careful records of their performance on the work taught in English and mathematics. During Key Stage 2, the school keeps records of attainment against National Curriculum levels once a year in English and termly in mathematics, although not in other subjects. However, assessments against these levels are not made more frequently in English or during Key Stage 1, so potential underachievement may not be recognised soon enough and the progress of individuals and groups cannot be monitored easily. In Reception, pupils' attainment in all six areas of learning is recorded regularly. As systems do not readily show the extent of progress made by individuals and groups each year, the school plans to develop electronic records.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. This is a learning school in which staff share its caring ethos and vision for maximising potential. They work closely as a team, supporting and evaluating each others' work, and strive to improve. Distributed leadership empowers senior and middle managers to monitor provision and take part in development planning. Their monitoring contributes effectively to professional development and has led to improvements in provision. Nevertheless, evaluation of teaching is not focused sharply enough on pupils' progress and consequently sometimes it is generous or does not pinpoint the key areas for development.

As part of its self-evaluation, the school seeks views from pupils, parents, staff and governors. This has led to accurate overall evaluation of the school's performance and identification of appropriate priorities. The development plans based on them are sound, but there is room for greater prioritisation, more measurable success criteria expressed in terms of impact, and closer links between whole-school plans and those for specific areas or subjects. The school correctly identified the areas of lower Key Stage 1 performance in 2006 and put in place targeted support and teaching sessions to address them this year.

Governors are very supportive of the school and have contributed effectively to staff appointments and the current building works. They have not provided challenge across the key areas for development and some statutory requirements are only partly in place.

There have been substantial improvements in the last two years in leadership and management, provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, attendance and care for pupils' personal development. Together with improvements on the issues raised at the last inspection, they show that the school is well placed to continue to improve.

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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	<b>School Overall</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
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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	1

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
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

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

Thank you for your warm welcome when I visited your school recently. You told me that you enjoyed school very much and I could see that clearly for myself.

I found that your school is a good school. You work hard and do well, reaching very high standards. Your teachers make lessons interesting and often give you really challenging activities, but sometimes the work is too easy for some of you. I have asked the school to make sure that teaching challenges you all to think hard so you make even better progress. The school has rightly decided to make improvements in assessment and I have asked for your progress to be checked more thoroughly to be sure that you are on target to do well. You can help by thinking hard in lessons about the work and how well you have done, and letting your teacher know if you would like greater challenge.

Staff look after you extremely well. They help you to develop into confident and caring young people with a strong sense of community spirit. You respect and value each other, keenly proposing pupils you are proud of for good deeds they have done. Your attendance has improved as fewer of you are away on holiday during term time.

Your school is well led. The staff know how well the school is doing and have made many changes that have helped it to improve. I have asked them to make clearer priorities and evaluate more precisely how effective the changes are. You can play your part in this, for example through school council and the questionnaires you fill in.

I hope that you continue to enjoy school and do well. I wish you well in working together with the staff to help your school become even better.

Best wishes

Gill Close HMI