

St Paul's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102035
Local Authority	Enfield
Inspection number	286256
Inspection date	16 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Christopher Parker

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	
School	419
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Barry McNee
Headteacher	Mrs Sally Moore
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2002
School address	Ringwood Way Winchmore Hill London N21 2RA
Telephone number	020 8360 3137
Fax number	020 8360 4559

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a large primary school where pupils come from supportive homes. Far fewer pupils than usual are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion that speaks a language other than English at home is below average. Fewer pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities than in most schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the school is good and it has some outstanding features. From good starting points, most pupils make good progress and attain very high standards by the end of Year 6. The pupils achieve well because the teaching is good. The outstanding leadership and management of the headteacher and the senior team have achieved much in a relatively short time. They have developed an ethos in which the pupils make excellent progress in their personal development and greatly enjoy the opportunities provided for them. The pupils' behaviour and attitudes are outstanding.

The youngest children have a very lively and beneficial introduction to school life. Activities are well planned and purposeful. Those led by adults, along with thoughtfully created opportunities for play, result in them becoming increasingly confident and independent. Many more children than usual reach the goals set for the end of the Reception Year.

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are significantly above average by the end of Year 2. Pupils continue to make good progress between Year 2 and 6 but the school's excellent tracking shows a period where progress slows before accelerating again in Years 5 and 6. Nevertheless, by the end of Year 6 standards are exceptionally high in English and mathematics. In science, in 2006, pupils did not achieve as well as expected and standards were not as high as in previous years, although they remained significantly above average.

Lessons are thoroughly planned and most ensure the pupils learn at a rapid pace. The tasks the teachers set challenge, engage and interest the pupils who relish learning new knowledge and skills. Occasionally, tasks are not demanding enough for those of higher ability so they do not make the rapid progress they should. The pupils' work is marked with very informative comments that pupils say help them to improve their work. Consequently, they know what they have to do to reach the challenging targets they are set.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. It has improved assessment which has had a notable impact on standards of writing. The school now provides a good range of information for parents. Most parents are very pleased with the school's performance and many commented on the excellent care and their child's enjoyment of school.

The leadership team has pinpointed precisely where improvements can be made to ensure pupils reach the highest standards. All aspects of the pupils' performance are rigorously monitored. Strategies to identify groups who are not making as much progress as expected ensure that support and resources are used very productively. Actions to improve standards in writing are proving very successful. The governors support the development of very positive conditions for learning and challenge the school to maintain very high standards. The school is extremely well placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure all pupils make consistently rapid progress and reach very high standards, particularly in science.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and reach exceptionally high standards by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics. Pupils who speak a language other than English at home achieve well. All pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being. When they start school, the children's skills and abilities are better developed than usual. They do well in the Reception Year, becoming confident speakers and enthusiastic learners. They continue to make good progress and reach well above average standards by the end of Year 2. In tests, writing and mathematics results were significantly better than the national average every year from 2002 to 2006. Results in reading have been exceptionally high over the same period.

Results in writing at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have not been quite as high as expected. The school has taken steps to raise standards further. Evidence from the pupils' work shows the range and quality of their writing has improved and there are many examples of a very high standard. In 2006 results in science dipped. The school has analysed why this occurred. It concluded that a greater emphasis on investigative approaches had resulted in some topics not receiving as much attention as they had in the past. The school is currently adjusting the organisation of science teaching to address this whilst maintaining the greater enjoyment the pupils say they get from working in this way.

The school is looking to improve the performance of small groups of pupils, for example some pupils in Year 4 who are not doing as well as expected in mathematics. The additional support for these pupils is beginning to show that they are making better progress. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress and most reach the expected level in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are excellent. The many opportunities the school provides result in the pupils becoming enthusiastic learners who say they really enjoy school. One pupil commented that the teachers 'are very good at making learning fun!' The pupils say that the work they have done towards becoming a recognised healthy school has influenced what they eat. They have adopted far healthier lifestyles as a result of their very good knowledge of the need for exercise. Year 2 pupils gained an excellent knowledge of how to stay safe whilst being briefed before a visit to Epping Forest. Attendance is excellent.

The school council represents the views of the pupils very well. It has made important decisions about playground resources and activities at lunchtime and some of its members would like to see these successes transferred to other breaks. Those who are given responsibilities, for example as house captains, take them very seriously. Exploring poetry, creating art in the style of Mondrian, and writing to pupils who attend a school in India make a very strong contribution to the pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

In the Reception Year, the much improved facilities for outdoor learning are used effectively. The adults provide interesting activities, both led by the teacher and those the children chose themselves, to develop a wide range of skills. Careful observations are made in lessons to monitor the progress of each child.

Most of the teaching in Years 1 to 6 provides good challenges for the pupils. For example, the outstanding teaching of writing in Year 5 is reflected in the rapid progress shown in the school's analysis of the excellent information it collects about each pupil. The marking of pupils' work and the assessment of their progress is used well in most lessons to make sure the tasks set for the pupils are at the right level. In one lesson seen during the inspection, this was not the case. More able pupils were unnecessarily required to complete the same tasks as other groups before proceeding to more demanding work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. The breadth of work on display and the pupils' enthusiasm for a wide range of topics illustrate very well the extent and high quality of the curriculum. Pupils talk enthusiastically about how they have enjoyed recent opportunities to carry out investigations and experiments in science. The Year 6 pupils are eagerly awaiting their imminent residential trip to Bournemouth.

The curriculum makes interesting links between subjects. Opportunities to write in a wide range of contexts, for example in history, contribute significantly to the improved standards of writing. Activities for the youngest children now make full use of the outdoor area and its resources. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities which pupils enjoy and appreciate.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. One parent commented that teachers 'are always willing to go the extra mile to provide support and guidance.' In discussions, pupils too feel their teachers are 'very caring.' Pupils say they feel safe in school and on the playground because they know they have an adult they can turn to if it becomes necessary. Arrangements to check the backgrounds of all those who work in the school meet requirements.

Pupils of all abilities are given very effective academic guidance to ensure they reach the levels they should. This is a key factor which is contributing to the improving achievement to take pupils to the highest levels in writing. Teachers monitor progress very closely and set challenging targets. Pupils with learning difficulties are given very good support by teaching assistants. A few parents have concerns about the changing funding arrangements for special education but the school has taken steps to extend support in the classroom and plans to extend it further from the start of the next academic year.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The very strong leadership and clear direction provided by the senior team and excellent governance are the main reasons for the school's continued success. The headteacher has moulded a cohesive team that share a common goal. Incisive self evaluation, although not reflected in some documents, is in practice used very well to question the effectiveness of the school's performance. Very thorough improvement planning is at the heart of the senior team's work. It provides a drive for even better provision to ensure rapid progress for all pupils. The impact of their work is well illustrated in the outstanding personal development of the pupils and the improvements achieved in raising standards in writing further. More recent activities to ensure all pupils make consistently rapid progress between Year 2 and 6 need more time to come to fruition but are, nevertheless, sharply and accurately focused.

The views of pupils and parents are sought. A few parents feel their views are not acted upon and would like more information but many feel this is an area where marked improvements have been made. Parents provide considerable support through fund raising although a few feel this is given too high a priority. Governors provide extremely good support for the school and hold it to account in order to maintain its admirable record.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<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

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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
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	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

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	1
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?	1
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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
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	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

24 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Paul's CofE Primary School, London, N21 2RA

This letter is to tell you about the findings of the recent inspection and to thank those of you who came to talk to me about your school. You go to a good school that has some outstanding features. It offers you many opportunities that help you to make excellent progress in your personal development. Those children I spoke to told me that they feel safe in school and on the playground. They said they really enjoy lessons and particularly like the way science is now being taught. I have asked the teachers to do more of this so that you all make rapid progress, particularly in science.

You benefit from an excellent curriculum. The work on display is very good and the artwork is interesting and very effective. You are doing well in lessons because the teachers make them interesting. You behave excellently, concentrate on your work and make good progress. Many of you reach very high standards. Some test results, show a few pupils did not make quite as much progress as might be expected. The headteacher is taking steps to make sure everybody does as well as they possibly can. The leadership team does a lot of checking to see that lessons are well planned, you are being well taught, your work is as good as it should be and you are reaching high standards. This is an excellent way for them to make sure you are all doing as well as you should.

I enjoyed being in your school. I hope that in the future it is even more successful in helping you to do as well as you possibly can.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Parker
Additional Inspector