



St Paul's C of E Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112406
Local Authority Cumbria
Inspection number 289275
Inspection dates 15–16 February 2007
Reporting inspector Geoffrey Yates

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Hawcoat Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria
Age range of pupils	7–11		LA14 4HF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01229 894664
Number on roll (school)	121	Fax number	01229 894665
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Kathleen Henshaw
		Headteacher	Mrs Margaret McCulloch
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Paul's Church of England Junior school is smaller than average. It is situated just outside the centre of Barrow in Furness in an area of high unemployment. The school does not have a defined catchment area and pupils come from at least four different infant schools. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is broadly average. The school has an average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. When pupils start school they have average standards. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status, the ArtMark silver award and the Sport ActiveMark.

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 and provides good value for money. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Good leadership and management by the headteacher and the dedication and skills of the staff are the key reasons for the school's success. Parents are very happy with all the school provides. One parent commented, 'St Paul's always takes children's views and feelings into consideration.' Pupils' personal development is outstanding. In this inclusive school all pupils feel valued. They say they feel safe and secure and help each other deal with any problems. Pupils show considerable respect for each other and behave very well. They really enjoy coming to school and attendance is above average. Pupils understand the benefits of healthy eating and enjoy the many opportunities to take part in sporting activities. Their attitudes towards learning are good. Pupils develop a very good understanding of the benefits of playing a part in the community by being actively involved as school council members in discussing ways of improving 'their' school. They consider the needs of those less fortunate than themselves by the support they give, for example, to a child in Columbia.

The school's own evidence demonstrates that pupils start school with broadly average skills. The progress that pupils make through the school is good. This includes pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The overall standards pupils attain are above the expected levels in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave. However, standards in writing are below average at the higher level. The school has good systems for setting targets to help pupils improve their work. However targets set to develop pupils' writing skills are not followed through to ensure that pupils' writing actually improves. A good curriculum has been important in promoting progress. Pupils' use of information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the previous inspection and pupils say it has made learning even more interesting. Every opportunity is taken to make the curriculum relevant and enjoyable for all pupils through a variety of outstanding extra-curricular activities. Music provision is of a very high quality with pupils learning to play both brass and woodwind instruments and the choir offering a large number of pupils the opportunity to make music.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers receive effective support from classroom assistants. Tasks that match pupils' learning enable them to make good progress in most aspects of the curriculum. Opportunities are missed across the curriculum for pupils to use and develop their writing skills. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher. Curriculum subject leaders are increasingly involved in monitoring their subjects. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development through the work of the 'Standards Committee'. The school has a good capacity to move even further forward.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Attainment on entry into Year 3 is average. Pupils make good progress and by the end of Year 6 standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. However, standards in writing are not as high as those in other aspects of English. Results in national tests in 2006 were above average but not as high as in previous years in English. Disruption in staffing adversely affected pupils' progress in developing their writing skills. As a result, standards in writing were below average, particularly at the higher level. A major strength of the school is the very good achievement of pupils in mathematics. This is because the subject is taught very well and pupils are given many opportunities to use and develop their skills not only in numeracy lessons but also in other subjects. Teachers know the specific needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and work well with classroom assistants to provide the support necessary for them to make similar progress to other groups of pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils enjoy coming to a school where they feel very safe and highly valued. They talk with tremendous enthusiasm about all aspects of school life. Their high level of enjoyment of school is demonstrated by the high uptake for extra-curricular activities such as choir practice. In order to cater for the large number of pupils who want to join the choir, a second choir has had to be established. Pupils thrive on the many learning experiences on offer. For example, they enjoy the challenges of the school's book week including taking part in the poetry reciting competition. Pupils from all age groups respond well and demonstrate outstanding speaking skills. Pupils behave very maturely and sensibly and get on well with each other. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. As a result, pupils develop a very clear sense of right and wrong and work together very successfully. These attributes contribute well to the skills that they will need when they are older. Pupils are keen to offer their views through the school council and respond well to positions of responsibility, both in the school and the community. They gain a good understanding of people and groups who are different from themselves through the work they are asked to do, for example, linked to the school's contact with a school in India. Pupils show their commitment to healthy lifestyles through choosing healthy eating options at break-times. The school's highly successful involvement in the Healthy Schools project has ensured that pupils have an excellent understanding of the need to stay healthy. Pupils' attendance is above average reflecting both parents and pupils views that St Paul's is 'an exciting place to be.'

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together and, as result learning, is made relevant to pupils' individual needs. All members of staff are very aware of the need to promote the individual academic and personal development of each pupil. A key strength in teaching is the regular opportunities provided for pupils to explain the outcomes of their work to their classmates. For example, in Year 6, pupils listen intently when one of their classmates explains what they have been doing in a science lesson. Teachers get to know their pupils well and, in the best lessons, they provide work which is well matched to individual needs. For example, in mathematics they are really challenged to use their mental arithmetic skills. In all age groups opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to use their writing skills well. There are some good examples of marking providing pupils with helpful comments to guide pupils on how to improve but checks are not always made that pupils follow these suggestions.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is of a good quality with good links made between subjects. However, opportunities are missed for pupils to make good use of their writing skills in subjects across the curriculum. The well structured programme of personal and social education helps pupils to stay safe and healthy and prepares them well for the future. A large number of pupils take part in the school's outstanding range of extra-curricular activities. These include both choral and instrumental music-making in and out of school, and many sporting opportunities. Pupils enjoy and benefit greatly from working with a range of visitors to the school, including a drummer from Sierra Leone and a famous children's author. The annual book week culminating in a poetry-reading competition provides an outstanding opportunity for pupils to use their speaking skills in front of an audience. Pupils greatly appreciate all that is available to them. One child offered the opinion, 'we enjoy everything we do.' The school has good links with the community, for example, regular community use is made of the school's ICT suite.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, support and guidance for pupils. The school's Christian ethos ensures an environment for learning that is highly supportive. Pupils are happy, feel safe and get on well with each other. They know that they can turn to adults for help and say that they are listened to and treated fairly. Teachers are well aware that transfer from infant schools can be a source of stress to some pupils and effective measures are used well to allay any fears. As a result, pupils' personal development and their achievements are good. Good arrangements for safeguarding pupils, child

protection and health and safety are in place. Good procedures for dealing with any absence help to ensure good attendance. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support and make good progress. The school has good systems to collect data about pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science but the whole-school approach to its effective use in setting targets for pupils to develop their writing skills takes insufficient account of each pupil's prior achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads and manages the school well. She has ensured that pupils are given a wide and exciting range of curriculum experiences that enhance overall provision. Her key focus on making sure all pupils feel valued and are included in everything the school offers is highly successful. The school has good systems in place to monitor and evaluate progress. Both parents and pupils are consulted on issues that might affect the school. Teachers in their roles as subject coordinators are developing their leadership skills but as yet do not have a good overview of their subjects. Governance is of a good quality. The governors know the school well and have ensured that the issues from the previous inspection have been addressed successfully. For example the school now has a well equipped and well used ICT suite. The school's self-evaluation has resulted in an overview of the work of the school which was confirmed by the inspection as accurate.

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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?	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	2
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	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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	2

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?	2

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.

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	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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

St Paul's C of E Junior School

Hawcoat Lane

Barrow-in-Furness

Cumbria

LA14 4HF

19 February 2007

Dear Children

Thank you for helping me during the inspection. I would like to tell you about my findings. You will not be surprised to know that I found your school to be a good school. I enjoyed being with you, watching you learn and talking to you. I especially enjoyed listening to the choir and the poetry readers. The list below shows some of the many things I liked about your school.

- You work hard and get on well with everyone.
- The school's council members enjoy having a say in what goes on.
- You like your headteacher, teachers and other members of staff.
- All the adults in school care for you very well.
- You enjoy the sporting and musical activities you take part in.

I have asked your teachers to do all they can to make the quality of your writing even better.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Yates

Lead inspector