

# St Paul's CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105498
<b>Local Authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	308870
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Geoffrey Yates

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	307
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Paul Wheeler
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr D Berry
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	St Paul's Road Withington Manchester Lancashire M20 4PG
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 2344170
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 4482746

---

<b>Age group</b>	3-11
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 September 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	308870

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: whether pupils in Key Stage 1 made the progress they should; the school's efforts to raise attendance levels; and the use of assessment information. Other aspects of the school's work were not inspected in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

The school is of an above average size for primary schools nationally. It serves an area of rented property and private housing situated in an inner city suburb of Manchester. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. An above average number of pupils receive free school meals. There is an above average proportion of pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English. The school has won many awards; they include the Sports Active award and Healthy Schools gold award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Parents are highly positive about all aspects of school life. One parent summed up the views of many by stating that, 'The school has a fantastic supportive and caring environment and I could not be happier.' The school fully achieves the aims of its mission statement, 'caring about learning, learning about caring'.

Inspection findings agree with parental views. There are three key reasons for the school's success all linked to highly effective leadership and management: its focus on always striving to improve on previous best; the high priority given in ensuring that every child within the school's multicultural community really matters; and highly effective teaching and learning. Outstanding care including robust safeguarding procedures, guidance and support contribute greatly to the pupils' academic and personal success. Exceptionally positive relationships ensure that all pupils feel safe and that there is someone to turn to if help is needed. All staff show a high degree of commitment to the pupils in their care.

Standards are well above the national average by the time pupils leave in English, mathematics and science. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language, make excellent progress: achievement is first-rate. By the time pupils enter Year 1 they meet national expectations in all areas of learning despite a high proportion of pupils coming from homes where English is an additional language. The school builds on this outstanding start so that by the end of Year 2 standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school ensures that pupils make rapid progress in Years 3 to 6, with test results showing well above average results in English, mathematics and science. This is especially so in mathematics and science where in the 2007 over 60% of pupils exceeded the standard expected for their age.

The school has compelling evidence to support its assessments that standards are above average this year despite a greater proportion of pupils with learning difficulties being in the current Year 6 age group. A major success in ensuring pupils make accelerated progress is the school leadership initiative, in which pupils are taught English and mathematics in groups based on their prior attainment. The excellent use made of assessment information about what pupils know, understand and can do ensures that within the taught groups work is accurately matched to extend pupils' learning. For example, the school was concerned that higher attaining Year 2 pupils were not achieving as well as they could in writing. As result of the action taken the most recent teacher assessments show that higher attainers achieve well above standards found nationally. Decisive leadership actions, including successfully addressing the organisational problem of having pupils in mixed-age group classes, ensure that pupils receive the best possible education. The school leadership team also ensures that pupils have a regular say in the running of 'their' school. The smooth transition from an old school building into a new one bears testimony to the quality of leadership and management shown by the headteacher and the leadership team.

Pupils are very aware of the need to lead a healthy lifestyle and understand, for example, the reasons why sweets can be bad for you. The school council came up with the idea of having a healthy tuck shop and this is very popular with all pupils. There are many opportunities for them to take part in sporting activities, including lacrosse and more traditional sports, and participation levels are high. The pupils demonstrate a high degree of self-confidence and

self-esteem which enables them to behave outstandingly well and really enjoy the wide range of opportunities the school provides, including residential visits.

While attendance levels have improved in the last year, they are slightly below the national average. The school takes the opportunity to involve pupils in the community through activities such as fund-raising events. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and know there is someone to talk to if they have a problem. They are proud to take on responsibilities including serving as school council members, class councillors and play leaders.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs exceptionally well through carefully tailored provision that makes learning very interesting both inside the classroom and in the outside areas. What is very apparent across the school is that subjects such as information and communication technology and physical education are given a high priority and as a result pupils' learning experiences cover a very broad spectrum. The leadership team, in its quest to improve on previous best, has ensured outside play provision is of a high quality, despite the lack of a school field.

The progress pupils make throughout the school is the result of outstanding teaching that caters thoroughly for all pupils' needs. All members of staff have up to date assessment information to enable them to plan work that challenges all pupils to achieve their very best. As a result pupils' learning experiences are of a high quality and standards are high. Major strengths in teaching include very good use of personal target-setting to involve pupils in their own learning, high quality relationships and very high expectations. The use made of teaching assistants in supporting pupils' learning is of an exceptionally high quality and enhances the quality of the work children produce. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are involved fully in all activities and receive very good support. Good use is made of outside agencies in helping to ensure that those pupils who are learning English as an additional language make rapid progress.

Outstanding leadership and management have ensured that all previous inspection issues have been addressed and that the school has moved from strength to strength. The school's accurate self-evaluation in bringing about continuous improvement ensures that the school knows itself well. The rigorous monitoring that takes place has led to appropriate actions being taken to ensure that the school meets challenging targets and maintains high levels of achievement. The headteacher is well respected by staff and parents. He inspires in pupils pride in their achievements and a desire to do even better. Governance is of a good quality with all legal requirements met. Plans are in place for governors to become even more involved in the strategic management of the school. The headteacher and the school's senior management team are successful in providing the highest quality academic and personal education for each child. As such, the school is in a position of considerable strength to improve even further. It provides outstanding value for money.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

High quality teaching, strong and highly effective leadership, and the use made of excellent resources ensures that children receive the best possible start to their education in an environment that encourages children to take risks safely. The school places a high priority on having very good links with parents, who are happy with all aspects of provision. Children start school with skills that are broadly typical for the age group, but communication and language skills for the majority of pupils are below those typical. The number of pupils who come from

homes where English is not the first language is well above the national average. Assessment information is used exceedingly well in providing a range of learning opportunities, both child and teacher initiated, that allow pupils of all skill levels to make rapid progress in all areas of learning. By the time pupils leave the Foundation Stage they have reached standards typical for pupils of this age. A high proportion of pupils exceed what is typical. The school is very successful in developing pupils' communication and language skills where the majority of pupils meet the expected standards but a significant proportion exceed what is expected.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that every effort is made to improve attendance levels to bring them up to the national average.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	1
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

<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>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	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

---

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

What a lovely school you have! Thank you for the friendly welcome you all gave me when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed my time with you and seeing some of you in lessons, even if it was only for a short time. I hope some of the older pupils enjoyed their residential visit and I am sorry I could not meet you.

I promised the group of pupils I did meet that I would let you know what I thought. I am pleased to tell you that your school is one of the very best I have been in and that you attend a really outstanding school. You do exceedingly well in lessons and in tests because you work hard and understand the importance of this for the future. I agree with you that your teachers and other adults make lessons very interesting and that if you need help you get it.

Your behaviour is excellent and I was very impressed with how polite you were. You were all very busy and active at lunchtime and you benefit from a wonderful playground and from many after-school clubs. You told me that you feel safe in school and that if problems occur that an adult will sort it out quickly when you tell them about it. There is just one area that you can all play a part in to help make your school even better. Please make sure that you don't stay away from school unless you are too ill to attend. If you all do that you can then help your school in its efforts to improve the attendance level which at the moment is slightly below that found in most schools nationally.

Keep on working hard and as a result you can continue to play a major part in ensuring that your school continues to be highly regarded.