

St Paul's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105928
Local Authority	Salford
Inspection number	308984
Inspection dates	7–8 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Geoffrey Yates

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	157
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Mrs Maureen Munday
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2003
School address	Nevile Road Salford Lancashire M7 3PT
Telephone number	0161 792 9474
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Paul's Church of England Primary School is a below average size primary school situated in the outskirts of Salford. Most pupils are of White British heritage, but an increasing number of pupils are of East European origin. Skill levels on entry to the nursery are typical of those found nationally. A below average proportion of the pupils are eligible to receive free school meals. The percentage identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

While there are clear signs that this is an improving school there is underachievement in Key Stage 2, and as a result the inspection does not support the school's judgement that its overall effectiveness is satisfactory. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2 and in the use made of assessment information about what pupils know, understand and can do in order to drive up standards. Parents are pleased with the school and keen to support it. One parent sums up the views of many, 'The school is caring and supportive of children and parents alike.'

From a broadly average start in Year 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. However, this progress is not sustained in the rest of the school in English and mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards are broadly average in science but below average in mathematics and well below in English. Pupils' writing is particularly weak. Appropriate action has been taken to improve provision in Years 3 to 6 but the impact of this is not yet showing through in pupils' standards and achievements.

The school knows that improvement is needed and the newly formed leadership team have rightly recognised that pupils can do better. The headteacher, all members of staff and governors are determined that pupils should do well. Satisfactory leadership and management have introduced successful recent initiatives that have raised standards in Key Stage 1 to average levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Reading standards in the rest of the school have also been improved. These developments, and the commitment of everyone in the school to making the necessary changes, show that the school has satisfactory capacity to move forward. There are some secure foundations on which the school can build. These include satisfactory teaching and pupils' good personal development.

The curriculum is satisfactory and weaknesses in the range of opportunities for writing are being addressed, but it is too early to see the outcomes of these improvements. A good range of enrichment activities contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of school.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that they could turn to a member of staff if they have any concerns. They are aware of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and are given good opportunities to take on responsibilities. Pupils behave and get on well with each other. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy taking part in a range of activities and visits. Good arrangements are in place to ensure that pupils are safe and that their social and emotional needs are met. The school is successful in ensuring that all pupils work and play well together and pupils who join the school mid-way through the year are made to feel very welcome and integrated fully.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Foundation Stage unit with levels of skills that are typical for their age. They settle quickly into the routines of the Nursery and clearly enjoy coming to school. Children develop self-confidence and learn to become increasingly independent, making at least

satisfactory progress in all the areas of learning. As a result, pupils' achievement is typical of children nationally by the time they enter Year 1. The quality of teaching and learning is good as is the leadership and management. All members of staff ensure that there is a wide range of well focused activities to promote learning. There is a good balance between child-initiated activities and teacher-led activities. The small numbers of pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language receive effective support. The importance given to developing children's early reading skills is clearly evident in the well planned activities that are enjoyed by all children. The outside area is increasingly being integrated into all aspects of learning. The overall quality of the children's experiences provides a good foundation for their future learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement and raise standards in writing and mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
- Use assessment information more rigorously to plan the next steps in pupils' learning to ensure that they are appropriately challenged and make good progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils' achievements are inadequate overall because the progress they make in Key Stage 2 does not build effectively on what has been achieved in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and this has been the case for a number of years. The main reason for this is that the school has not always used assessment information well enough to ensure pupils make the progress of which they are capable. This issue is now being addressed and there are signs that pupils' achievement is improving. By the time pupils enter Year 1 they have reached the nationally expected goals set for their age. Key Stage 1 assessments in 2007 showed that standards overall were broadly average; indicating good improvement on previous years' results and satisfactory achievement. By the end of Year 6, standards in science are broadly average with some higher attaining pupils doing well. However, standards in mathematics and English have been below the national average in four out of the past five years with well below average performance in writing. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make inadequate progress in writing and mathematics. The school did not meet its targets set for year 6 in summer 2007. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress, as do those pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils like school and enjoy good relationships with each other and the staff. When asked what they liked most about the school one pupil replied, 'You just feel welcome.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Behaviour is good and the great majority of pupils have a positive attitude to school. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and appreciate the fact that the school provides a healthy meal option at dinnertime. There are sound links with the community and the church that successfully promote social skills. Pupils are proud of being members of the school council and of acting as playground buddies. They talk enthusiastically of the role they play in shaping the school and the support they give to charities. For example, they have brought about improvements to the toilets and raised £950 towards their 'Send a Cow' appeal for Zambia. Weaknesses, for example, in the acquisition

of important writing skills in Years 3 to 6 mean that pupils are not well enough prepared for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is improving which is clearly demonstrated by the progress pupils make in Years 1 and 2. A key weakness has been the lack of up to date assessment information of pupils' progress to help teachers plan lessons and this issue is now being addressed. The teachers have effective behaviour management strategies and so lessons run smoothly and classrooms are managed well. Staff know their pupils very well and the level of care shown for their personal needs is good. Lessons are pitched at the right level for pupils in Key Stage 1, but in some lessons in Key Stage 2, the work is not challenging enough for the more able pupils. Question and answer sessions in particular are not always geared well enough to meet the wide range of abilities in the class. Teaching assistants provide valuable support but are not always used effectively. A new marking system has been introduced but it has not been in place long enough to be truly effective in ensuring, for example, that pupils' work is presented well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Previous weaknesses in the planning for English and mathematics have contributed to pupils' underachievement in Years 3 to 6. Recent changes and improvements have ensured that pupils are now offered a satisfactory, broad and balanced range of activities. In addition, the school has started to link pupils' learning in different subjects together to make it more meaningful. However, it is too early for the changes made to have an impact on overall standards. Provision in information and communication technology has improved since the previous inspection. There is a good range of activities that enrich the curriculum. These include book weeks, the very good use of a visiting music specialist to ensure that music plays an important part in the curriculum and weekly Spanish lessons. A residential visit is organised and this helps the pupils to develop their personal and social skills. Visitors, including local religious leaders, bring their own expertise and experiences to help pupils' understanding. Pupils talk enthusiastically about these opportunities. However, there are few out-of-school clubs to enhance pupils' enjoyment of learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides good pastoral support. Pupils feel safe and secure in school telling inspectors that, 'There is always someone there to help us.' Child protection requirements and safeguarding procedures are clear and understood by all staff. Health and safety procedures are properly underpinned by risk assessments, enabling pupils to undertake activities safely both on and off school premises. Parents are pleased with the care their children receive, and are right in their view that the school takes good personal care of their children. The school has good procedures to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils, especially those with emotional difficulties and this helps them to successfully face and overcome their difficulties. The growing numbers

of East European origin pupils are integrated fully into the life of the school. The school has greatly improved its assessment systems in relation to pupils' academic procedures. This has already proved to be useful by highlighting pupils who are making inadequate progress. However, the use of the information provided is still in its infancy and as such is not truly effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management team is now more focused on raising standards and there are clear signs of improvement. With the support of the local authority, systems have been put in place that have led to higher standards in Years 1 and 2 and in reading in Years 3 to 6. The school judges its self-evaluation systems and overall effectiveness to be satisfactory and this is understandable in the light of the recent improvements. The headteacher has a clear view of what needs to be improved and there are increasingly effective systems to check how well improvements are taking place. However, the impact of improvements to pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 is only just beginning to show through and consequently overall effectiveness remains inadequate. Until recently there has not been enough emphasis on rigorously evaluating the progress individual pupils make so that effective action could be taken if progress was not good enough. The improvements made to the school's assessment procedures are beginning to bring about improvement. Subject leaders have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their areas but do not yet rigorously monitor and evaluate the impact of any actions taken to improve standards. Governors are committed to the school and focused on bringing about improvement. They have worked well to ensure that a large budget deficit has been reduced significantly. The school is heading in the right direction and has satisfactory capacity 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	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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	4
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?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of St Paul's Church of England Primary School, Salford, M7 3PT

Thank you for making my colleague and I so welcome when we came to meet you. We enjoyed listening to what you had to say about your school and were pleased to hear how much you enjoy school. It was great to hear the older pupils singing and to see how well you all get on well together in the playground and around school. We agree with you that your teachers are kind and helpful and that they care for you and listen to what you have to say.

The school makes sure you are safe and all the staff are really helpful when problems arise. We think the younger children are really lucky to have an exciting outside area to work and play in. The children in the reception unit and in Years 1 and 2 are getting on well and there are some good things happening in the juniors too. However, whereas children in the juniors are doing better in science and reading they are not doing as well as they should in writing and mathematics and so we have said that the school needs something called a 'Notice to Improve'. This will mean that inspectors will visit the school again within the next twelve months to see if things have improved. Your school now has a good system in place that shows how well you are doing in English and mathematics. We want to make sure that if it shows you are not doing as well as you should that something is done about it quickly.

Most of all we want you to really try your best at all times and continue to enjoy all the opportunities that your school offers you.

Good luck and very best wishes for your future.