

# St Paul's CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105937
<b>Local Authority</b>	Salford
<b>Inspection number</b>	308988
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Leszek Iwaskow 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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	165
<b>School</b>	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Steve Edwards
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Richard Chipchase
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 January 2005
<b>School address</b>	Heathside Grove Walkden Manchester Greater Manchester M28 3NZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 7908915
<b>Fax number</b>	0

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

St Paul's Church of England Primary School is located in a residential area on the edge of Salford. The school is smaller than average in size and the number of pupils on roll is falling. A significant number live in challenging circumstances and parental unemployment is high. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average. There are none currently with statements of special educational needs. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is increasing but remains below the national average. A small proportion of pupils need help learning English as an additional language. Pupil mobility has traditionally been high although this has stabilised recently. There is little parental involvement in the school. The school has held 'Healthy Schools' status since 2005 and is working towards being an Eco school. The school also holds the Activemark. The headteacher took up post in January 2007. A Children's Centre has recently been opened in the school grounds. This is intended to provide the local community with a range of integrated services and to improve the early education of children in the community.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Pupils do not achieve as well as they should because the curriculum is not sufficiently broad and balanced or adapted suitably to meet their needs. The quality of teaching is too variable between classes and as a result pupils' progress over time is inconsistent and not good enough overall. A secure trend of improvement has not been established, notably at Key Stage 2 and pupils do not reach the standards of which they are capable, especially in literacy and across a range of foundation subjects, by the time they leave the school.

The school has faced a disruptive period when leadership difficulties have hampered improvement. Following the appointment of the current headteacher last year, the school was challenged with changing direction to better meet the needs of its pupils. However, progress has been too slow in developing and restructuring certain aspects of provision, for example information and communication technology (ICT). There are significant weaknesses in the way in which the curriculum is organised, managed and delivered. The school has focused its efforts and resources on the core subjects, especially improving provision in writing, which has led to a neglect of other curriculum areas. Teaching is functional rather than creative and challenging and as a result pupils do not make sufficient progress in many aspects of their learning. The role of middle leaders is underdeveloped; entrenched practice, a resistance to change and, in some cases, a lack of urgency have hampered plans. Some changes have been initiated, such as the tracking of pupils' progress. However, this is not being used effectively enough to inform planning or engage teachers in thinking about how to change practice to best meet the needs of their pupils.

On the whole, pupils find the school a place they enjoy coming to and they feel safe. Pupils particularly enjoy those opportunities when they can work practically or when they are able to do something different, whether this is with a visitor from Action Aid or a visiting poet. They look forward to visits outside their local environment and they expressed a desire for more opportunities to enjoy subjects such as art or music. They are aware of the need to lead healthy lives and like the opportunities to participate in sport after school.

The headteacher and governors understand that there is a need to raise standards and improve the quality of provision. There is also a greater realisation that more emphasis needs to be placed on ensuring that pupils not only achieve in lessons but also enjoy their learning. However, not all staff share this vision or demonstrate the strong commitment and collective determination to ensure that improvements have a rapid and positive impact on pupils' learning and achievement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

When children enter the Nursery, they have skills which are generally well below national expectations for their age, particularly in writing, reading and personal and emotional development. Induction procedures ensure that children settle quickly and are happy in the

safe and caring environment. Staff pay good attention to developing children's social skills: for instance, an incident of inappropriate behaviour during the inspection was effectively dealt with in a supportive way. The learning environment is well resourced and appropriate use is made of the outdoor area. Child-initiated and teacher-led activities are planned taking account of the children's ages. However, planning is not sufficiently focused on clear and identifiable outcomes, and the more able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently. Children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals but, at present, when they enter Year 1, the majority are still working at levels below those expected for their age, particularly in writing.

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

- Raise standards, particularly in literacy and the foundation subjects to make sure that pupils make better progress
- Improve leadership and management at all levels to ensure that both provision and learning are at least good throughout the school
- Ensure the curriculum is developed to provide greater breadth and balance and to meet the needs of all learners
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it engages pupils better and increases their enjoyment of learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Pupils do not consistently achieve as well as they should in order to attain the standards of which they are capable by the time they leave school in Year 6. Pupils make best progress in Key Stage 1. For example, in 2007, Year 2 pupils made good progress to attain standards that were broadly in line with the national average. However, standards attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 vary from year to year and no clear picture of improvement has been established. Although results in Key Stage 2 improved in 2007 to reach broadly average levels, pupils' achievement in the previous two years was significantly worse than that of pupils in similar schools. Improvements in 2007 were due to better progress in science and mathematics, with English remaining a weakness. School leaders acknowledge that results have fluctuated significantly over a number of years and are not confident that this improvement will be sustained this year especially in Key Stage 2. Current assessment information and evidence from the pupils' work shows that previous standards have not been sustained and that fewer pupils are likely to meet their targets in end of key stage tests. The school's own assessment records confirm that pupils' progress is erratic across classes, which reflects the quality of teaching they receive. In some years, they make satisfactory progress: in others, they show little improvement. The most able pupils in particular are not being challenged and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not guided sufficiently to enable them to make good enough gains in their learning. Pupils make inadequate progress in foundation subjects since the teaching of these subjects lacks depth, is disjointed or almost absent in some subjects in some classes.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils are well behaved in nearly all lessons and around the school. They are polite and courteous to each other and to adults. Their moral and social development is good but there is less evidence in pupils' work to show that they are learning to live in a diverse society. The school holds the

Healthy Schools Award and because of this work, pupils have a good understanding of the need to adopt healthy lifestyles. Pupils generally make healthy choices at lunchtime. Some pupils also choose to take part in extra-curricular sporting activities. However, in some classes, pupils do not receive the recommended two hours of physical education per week. Most pupils feel confident that problems are usually dealt with promptly by the headteacher but some parents and pupils expressed concerns about bullying.

Although pupils generally enjoy lessons, older pupils said that they would like greater variety, and particularly to engage in art and music, as well as more opportunities to work collaboratively. They take on responsibilities as monitors, house captains and school council members. The school council is currently involved in plans to improve the school playground. However, their role is still in the early stages of development. Attendance remains below the national average. The school has put measures in place to improve this but these are adversely affected by a small number of families who do not ensure that their children attend school regularly. Pupils learn to contribute to the community by raising money for various charities but otherwise have limited opportunities to gain from such positive experiences. The focus on numeracy and literacy helps pupils to develop the skills needed for their future working lives but they still experience difficulties in applying these to everyday situations.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 4**

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Lessons vary considerably in quality with some teaching that is good and some that is inadequate. Consequently pupils do not make good enough progress over time relative to their starting points; this is particularly the case in Key Stage 2. Teachers show greater confidence in teaching English and mathematics rather than the foundation subjects. This is also reflected in the quality of the planning. However, relationships in class are good.

In the few lessons where teaching is good, there are good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking, listening and reasoning skills, including working with their 'talk partners'. In lessons where teaching is weak, pupils of differing abilities undertake the same task; more able pupils are insufficiently challenged and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not provided with the necessary guidance to support their learning. The activities provided are often mundane and lack purpose. Occasionally, whole-class sessions are too lengthy and lack pace. Many pupils lack the confidence to work independently and have become over-reliant on the teachers to provide the correct answer. There are limited opportunities for pupils to apply their skills and learning in literacy and numeracy in other subjects across the curriculum. Learning in the foundation subjects is weak because pupils are not given sufficient cohesive experiences to be able to progressively build up their skills, knowledge and understanding. In these foundation subjects, pupils are set low level tasks and there is an over-reliance on the use of worksheets in some classes.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 4**

The school considers that the curriculum meets requirements and is broad and balanced. Inspectors disagree and judge that it is inadequate because insufficient time is spent to ensure in-depth teaching of subjects other than mathematics, English and science. The school has

correctly identified the need to raise standards in mathematics and literacy, particularly writing, and has made this a priority. Long morning sessions focus exclusively on teaching these two subjects. In some classes part of the afternoon sessions may also be taken up with further work in these areas. Pupils are usually removed from afternoon classes for intervention and catch up programmes. This leaves little time in afternoon sessions to enable teachers to cover requirements in other subjects such as religious education, music, history and geography. In many of these subjects, teachers choose not to teach what has been planned for or 'cherry pick' small parts of the teaching programme that they feel secure in teaching. There is also extensive over-reliance on nationally published schemes of work which have not been sufficiently adapted and developed to meet the needs and resources of the school or the pupils. There is inadequate provision to teach personal, social and health education. The school and local authority both identified the urgent need to establish the social, emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) programme but this has not yet happened. The provision for ICT was criticised in the last inspection. Until very recently, the continuing lack of computers has prevented the effective teaching of ICT. The very recent purchase of laptops has made it easier for teachers but, in the mean time, many pupils have not received enough quality opportunities to be able to develop their skills sufficiently in this vital area.

Pupils benefit from opportunities to learn outside their immediate classroom environment. They enjoy visits to a variety of places such as the Stockport Air Raid museum or Blackleach Country Park. They also gain from visitors to the school who teach them about road safety or entertain them with Chinese Lion dancing or light and sound shows. These are valuable, but often isolated, experiences which are not used effectively enough to build on learning in relevant subjects in school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

An effective behaviour policy, 'Golden Time' and a house points system ensure that pupils behave well. Pupils are particularly pleased to be chosen as 'Golden Angels' because this brings the reward of a family ticket to watch a rugby match at Salford City Reds. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified and supported by individual programmes. However, their targets are too broad and pupils' progress is not tracked rigorously or often enough for the outcomes of intervention strategies to be evaluated properly. Procedures are in place to track the progress of all pupils. However, these are not being used on a regular basis by teachers to inform their planning in order to raise the achievement of pupils more effectively. There are no set structures in place for setting individual targets for pupils and this leads to inconsistencies between subjects and classes. Work is marked regularly but the quality of marking varies and teachers' comments do not give sufficient guidance to help pupils to make the next steps in their learning. Safeguarding procedures are robust and partnerships with external agencies ensure that the more vulnerable pupils are well cared for.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 4**

Leadership and management are inadequate. The school has come through a difficult period where little progress was made due to leadership difficulties which de-stabilised the school. Since his appointment, the headteacher has attempted to build up staff confidence and promote a more transparent style of management. This change of emphasis has been commented on

positively by teachers, pupils, governors and some parents. There is a clear vision of the direction in which the school now needs to develop. There is a strong emphasis placed on the need to raise standards to ensure that all pupils reach their full potential. However, progress towards this has been slow. The previous report identified the need for the management of some subjects to be improved. This has not happened and poor management has resulted in a weak and disjointed curriculum with inadequate provision in the foundation subjects. Subject leaders have not been sufficiently accountable, engaged or pro-active in their areas of responsibility and provision in many of these subjects is unsatisfactory.

Training has focused on the core, particularly literacy, with few opportunities for teachers to develop good practice in other areas. Budgetary constraints have made it difficult to provide sufficient resources for other areas such as ICT. Despite the open door policy encouraged by the headteacher and governors, few parents choose to become involved in the life of the school and in the education of their children.

Governors are aware of the many difficulties the school has been faced with. They are fully supportive of the headteacher and recognise the need to restructure provision throughout the school. They appreciate the fact that they are now better informed about issues and are aware of the need to change the dynamics of the school if it is to move forward. Despite this, the school has not made sufficient progress since the last inspection and does not provide value for money.

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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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
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	4

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<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>	<b>4</b>
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
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	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of St Paul's C of E Primary School, Manchester, M28 3NZ

This letter is to tell you about our findings when we inspected your school. There were several things we liked about your school, and we were very impressed with your honesty and good behaviour. We were pleased to see that you are eager to take on responsibilities and help each other. We know that you enjoy the special events such as when a visiting poet comes to the school, or when you go on visits.

However, we have decided that your school is not as good as it could be and needs to improve, so we have placed it in 'special measures'. This means that your school will be helped to make the improvements and some other inspectors will visit the school regularly to check the progress everyone is making.

We think you can improve your reading and writing and to a lesser extent your mathematics. The teachers will be working hard to help you achieve this. We have asked them to make your lessons even more interesting and make the tasks they set in lessons more challenging in order to make you really think. It also means you need to play your part by listening to what they tell you and trying that little bit harder. Your parents will be really proud if you manage to do this, especially if you become a 'Golden Angel' and win that family ticket to see the Salford Reds.

We noticed that you seemed to spend much less time on subjects such as music, art, history and geography which you told us you really enjoy. Therefore we have asked the teachers to look at their planning and make sure that you get your fair share of lessons in these subjects. Until the new laptops arrived very recently, many of you did not have sufficient opportunities to learn the computer skills that will help you as you get older.

Everyone will all need to work together to ensure the school improves as quickly as possible. I am sure you will do your best.

I wish you every success in the future.