

St Paul's Church of England Combined School, Wooburn

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110469
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	310321
Inspection date	4 October 2007
Reporting inspector	John Earish

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	254
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Lorraine Couves
Headteacher	Mrs Ruth Goddard
Date of previous school inspection	2 June 2003
School address	Stratford Drive Wooburn Green High Wycombe HP10 0QH
Telephone number	01628 521553
Fax number	01628 522450

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	4 October 2007
Inspection number	310321

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: 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, achievement and standards, teaching and learning, leadership and management, personal development and well-being, and care, guidance and support, gathering evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and documents. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with parents, children, governors and staff also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated 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

This large primary school admits pupils from a variety of social backgrounds. It is very popular and oversubscribed. A strong Christian ethos underpins all that the school does. Most pupils are of White British heritage with a small number from different minority ethnic groups. When children start school, their skills and abilities are above those expected of four year olds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below that found nationally.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

For many years, the pupils at St Paul's Combined School have attained well above average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6. The inspector wanted to find out why the school was successful and whether the pupils continued to make good progress.

The inspector found this to be a good school with some outstanding features. Careful monitoring, highly effective self-evaluation and actions to improve and develop the curriculum have maintained pupils' good progress. The value added continues to rise and last year St Paul's was amongst the top fifteen per cent of all schools nationally. The pupils are adamant this is a 'very good school' because 'the teachers are really good' and 'you are expected to work hard'. Parents agree and are overwhelmingly positive about their children's education.

Pupils' personal development and their care, support and guidance are outstanding because the adults are highly effective at tracking and supporting the pupils' personal and academic progress so they can achieve well. As a result, the pupils feel secure and happy. This underpins much of the school's continued success. Pupils enjoy coming to school and take great pride in all that they do. Attendance is excellent. Pupils treat each other with great respect, behave exceptionally well and genuinely want to learn. Very many of the pupils are already competent independent learners, well able to discuss their learning with their friends and to use their targets to improve their work. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the community, participating in local and national events, involving themselves in charity fund-raising, and decision-making through the School Council.

All groups of pupils achieve well because the teaching is of consistently good quality. This is yet another reason for the school's continued success. The regular and thorough monitoring of teaching and learning ensures pupils make good progress. Through such monitoring, the school has identified the need for some teachers to make better use of the pupils' well-developed abilities to learn confidently and independently on their own. The pupils say they enjoy working in this way as it helps them learn from their mistakes, develops their self-reliance and critical thinking skills.

The outstanding curriculum is constantly evolving and captures pupils' enthusiasm and interest whatever their backgrounds. There are an exceptionally good number of enhancements. These include numerous clubs and activities, theme days, trips in all years and various other activities that promote teamwork. The staff's commitment to self-improvement led to a recognition that pupils needed more time to write extensively using a range of genre across the curriculum. Extensive trials led to a new approach that encourages pupils to write creatively, and with a sense of fun using their self-awareness and empathy for their surroundings and each other. The curriculum also addresses social and emotional needs very well. Pupils talk about enjoying circle time where they discuss matters important to them, and are motivated by the varied activities associated with the exceptionally good opportunities to develop their personal, social, health and citizenship skills.

Good leadership and management have established a caring environment where all pupils are equally valued and diversity is celebrated. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher and her deputy has inspired the teachers to strive to be outstanding in every way. All adults are working hard as a team to support the senior managers in this quest by honing their skills at introducing and monitoring new initiatives in order to sustain rapid progress. In addition, the

school is extremely good at working in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being. The governing body is able to participate in strategic planning and give effective support because governors know the school well. There is a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The quality of education in the Foundation Stage is good and children achieve well. Children start school with skills and abilities that are above those expected of pupils aged four. They make good progress because teaching is of consistently good quality or better and most children exceed the goals set for them by the start of Year 1. The outstanding curriculum promotes children's social, personal, emotional and academic very well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers fully capitalise on opportunities during lessons for pupils to work independently and use their initiative in order to sustain rapid progress.

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.

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?	2
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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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	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	1
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?	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?	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 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	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

11 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Paul's Church of England Combined School, Wooburn, High Wycombe, HP10 0QH

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I was very impressed with your friendliness and your sensible and helpful attitudes towards each other. I believe, like you, that you go to a good school. I also feel that in many areas your school is outstanding. This means that it does some things very well indeed.

I particularly liked the fact that you do so well in English, mathematics and science. You enjoy your school and want to do well. You behave extremely well, and help and support each other in all that you do. This means that your teachers can get on with teaching you new and interesting things and are not distracted by any misbehaviour. You also told me that you find the lessons fun and usually challenging. You could help your teachers by telling them when you find the work too easy. The teaching in your school is good and often better, and it means that, together with your positive attitudes to work, you make good progress.

Your school is good and has been for many years partly because the adults run the school well. They know your needs and are always looking at ways to improve your learning. To make it even better, however, I am asking your teachers to give you even more opportunities to use your own initiative during lessons and to work independently.

I am sure that you are ready for this challenge! I know that you will continue to work hard and I am sure that you will help your teachers to make your school even better. I hope that you have great success in the future.

Yours faithfully,

John Earish

Lead inspector