

# St Paul's CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116886
<b>Local Authority</b>	Herefordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	326475
<b>Inspection date</b>	4 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alison Grainger

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	432
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Bowler
<b>Headteacher</b>	Reg Thomas
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 February 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Hampton Dene Road Tupsley Hereford HR1 1UX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01432 273784
<b>Fax number</b>	01432 273784

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- Pupils' progress throughout the school and the standards reached, particularly in writing and by more able pupils.
- The contribution of provision, particularly teaching, the links between subjects and academic guidance to pupils' progress.
- The quality of pupils' personal development and well-being.
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers in evaluating provision and taking action for improvement.

Evidence was gathered from: the school's data on pupils' progress; visits to lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work; observation of an assembly; discussions with staff, governors, parents and pupils; and analysis of responses to the parents' questionnaire. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments of these areas, 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 larger than average. Most pupils are White British and almost all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

## 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. Pupils make good progress academically and develop many good qualities that prepare them well for their future lives. The vast majority of pupils behave impeccably and the overall standard of behaviour is good. Almost all pupils show consideration for others, and older pupils care well for younger ones. As one parent observed, 'teachers promote pupils' good behaviour and kindness to one another'. The school responds swiftly if it is aware of any acts of unkindness and is successful in promoting good relationships.

Pupils make a strong contribution to the school and wider community. They raise funds for charities and have a well-developed awareness of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. Older pupils, in particular, diligently undertake many responsibilities, such as those of librarians and house captains. The school council is involved well in improving the school, for example taking action to ensure pupils have access to drinking water throughout the school day. Pupils have served on working groups with parents, such as for healthy eating, and have been involved in the development of the school travel plan. It is not surprising, therefore, that pupils adopt healthy lifestyles well and understand the importance of a good diet and regular exercise. Pupils are taught much about the importance of making sensible lifestyle choices and are given strong guidance on how to stay safe in school and outside. Pupils know, for example, how to stay safe when using the internet.

An excellent range of activities in addition to daily lessons contribute much to pupils' enjoyment of school and broaden their experiences. Pupils have access to many activities not normally found in a primary school, such as Latin club and Morris dancing, as well as sports, music, chess, birdwatching and gardening. A high proportion of pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn to play a musical instrument. There are good opportunities for pupils to take part in music and drama performances. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their talents and gain self-confidence and new interests.

Pupils' achievement is good. From starting points at the level typically expected overall, children get off to a strong start in the Reception Year. In most recent years, standards have been well above average by the end of Year 6. In some years, there has been exceptionally high performance. Pupils' results were not as high as usual at the end of Year 6 last year. Science standards remained very high but there was a dip in writing in particular, with less pupils than in previous years reaching the higher level for their age. The school's assessments of pupils' current standards and the work seen during the inspection show that standards are recovering. Pupils' progress across the school is currently good overall. Even so, the school is keenly aware that progress still has to be speeded up in writing. It knows that more pupils need to get to the higher levels across the range of their work, and particularly in writing.

Pupils make good progress because teaching is good. Teachers' expectations of pupils are appropriately high and good account is taken of the needs of different ability groups. Competent teaching assistants are well deployed to support learning. In English lessons in Year 6, for example, the adults provide effective mentoring for individual pupils as they write. Excellent relationships create a very positive atmosphere and help these older pupils to develop initiative and independence as learners. Across the school, teachers ensure that lessons have a clear focus and that instruction and activities relate well to it. Teachers' marking is better than at the last inspection in most classes, offering pupils clear guidance on how they can improve their work and helping them to progress well.

Many strengths are evident in the care for pupils, such as in the robust arrangements for safeguarding pupils, procedures for first aid, and pastoral support. However, the monitoring of pupils' progress requires improvement and, therefore the overall grade for care, guidance and support for pupils is satisfactory rather than good. There is inconsistency across the school in how pupils' attainment and progress are recorded and checked. The school lacks a rigorous system for tracking how well individual pupils are doing throughout their time in the school. The current systems do not allow easy and frequent reviews to not only check on the progress of pupils but also to raise questions about how well the school is meeting their needs. As a result, the school cannot always respond swiftly when pupils are off track. This means that pupils do not always achieve as well as they are able, particularly in writing.

Many parents are pleased with the school, including with the approachability of the staff. Several parents of pupils who entered the school later than at the usual time told inspectors how pleased they were with the welcome they and their children received. Nevertheless, a minority of parents have concerns about the quality of the school's communication with them. In particular, some parents of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do not feel well enough informed. The school agrees that its communication with parents could be better. It has already reviewed the format of the individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make them easier to discuss with both pupils and parents.

Good leadership and management ensure that the right action is taken when weaknesses are identified. The school has already implemented some good initiatives to improve pupils' writing as a result of its review of provision in this area. Links between subjects are being developed well, for example to promote better opportunities for writing. Self-evaluation has a good effect overall and shows that the school has a good capacity to improve further. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily. Pupils are taught to value diversity and respect other faiths. The school has links with schools elsewhere in this country and overseas. However, it is not fully proactive in reaching out to, and engaging with, communities outside the school.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Many parents told inspectors how pleased they are with the start their children have in Reception. One parent said, 'my child is exceptionally happy in the school'. Excellent attention to children's welfare, including the arrangements for inducting them into school, ensures that children settle quickly. Children's personal development is outstanding. They behave extremely well, get on tremendously with each other and with the adults in school, and are very independent.

Children make good progress in their learning and, by the time they move to Year 1, standards are above average. Last year, writing standards were not as strong as those in reading and mathematical development. Effective action has been taken to improve the writing standards this year, for example, through stimulating activities relating to stories. Children enjoy retelling stories in writing, pictures and role play. Such developments result from good leadership and management.

Teaching and the curriculum are good. A balanced approach is taken to the areas of learning through stimulating activities indoors and outside. A particularly successful feature is the focused ability group teaching for early reading, writing, mathematics and language development. There are some missed opportunities, however, to move learning on through interactions with children during activities that they have selected for themselves.

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

- Accelerate pupils in writing and help more to reach the higher levels in this aspect of their work in particular.
- Use better systems for tracking pupils' progress through the school to support frequent reviews of how well individuals are doing.
- Improve communication with parents, particularly regarding provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.



## 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?	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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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	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?	No

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

5 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Paul's C of E Primary School, Hereford HR1 1UX

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you, visiting your lessons and looking at your work. We found that your school is a good school. It helps you to develop many good personal qualities and to make good progress with your learning.

We saw that the behaviour in your school is good and that many of you behave impeccably. You told us that you enjoy school. We saw you enjoying many activities, including dancing and rehearsing for a drama and music production. Your school provides you with an excellent range of activities in addition to your daily lessons, including a huge range of clubs. You develop a good understanding of how to keep fit and healthy and how to stay safe.

Children in Reception get off to a good start. You then make good progress over the rest of the time in school. You do well because the teaching is good. The adults in school recognise that there are some things that could be even better. To help them, we have asked them to do these three things in particular.

- Speed up your progress in writing and help more of you to reach the higher levels in this area in particular.
- Use better systems for tracking the progress you make right through the school. We have asked the adults to do this in a way that will help them to make more frequent checks on how well each of you is doing.
- Improve the communication with your parents, particularly to help those of you who might find learning difficult or be struggling a bit with your work.

You can help by making sure that you always behave well, are kind to each other and do your best. Please make sure that you tell your teachers if you need more help or if you think you need harder work. Thank you once again for your help and for welcoming us.

Yours faithfully

Alison Grainger

Lead inspector