

St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Chipperfield

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117441
Local Authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	326611
Inspection date	5 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	225
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Stephen Morrill
Headteacher	Mrs Norah Tattersall
Date of previous school inspection	27 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	The Common Chipperfield Kings Langley Hertfordshire WD4 9BS
Telephone number	01923 262340

Age group	3–11
Inspection date	5 May 2009
Inspection number	326611

Fax number

01923 260904

Age group	3-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school. In addition, the following issues were investigated.

- Are the current Year 6 pupils on course to meet their targets and achieve well?
- What is the impact of the school's focus on strengthening pupils' learning?
- How well do teachers with responsibilities contribute to the school's monitoring and evaluation processes?

Evidence was gathered from the school's analysis of pupils' progress, a scrutiny of samples of their work and observations of pupils in lessons. Discussions were held with staff, governors and pupils. In addition, the responses of 61 parents' questionnaires were analysed and their comments taken into account. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspectors 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

St Paul's is an average-sized village primary school. Most pupils come from the immediate locality though an increasing number live further afield. Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than that found in most schools. Most of these pupils find learning challenging or have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school is currently being extended to enable it to accommodate all the year groups in permanent buildings. In addition, there is to be a Children's Centre based at the school and this too will require some additional accommodation. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a part-time Nursery class and Reception class. The school has a new headteacher who has been in post for two years. It has gained a number of awards including Healthy Schools and Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Paul's is a good school where pupils achieve well in their personal and academic development. It has some outstanding features and is on an upward trend. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They thoroughly enjoy school and learning because the staff provide a good range of stimulating activities in lessons and in the before- and after-school clubs. The school has shown good improvement since the previous inspection. The new headteacher, who provides excellent leadership and management, is instrumental in this. She has built successfully on the many strengths identified in the previous inspection. She has, for example, brought more rigour and structure to the evaluation processes and has strengthened provision. She is supported well by an outstanding deputy headteacher and committed team of staff who contribute very well to the school's excellent procedures for checking pupils' progress and the school's provision. Teachers with responsibilities carry out their duties exceptionally well and all the staff know that their views are valued by senior leaders. This encourages close teamwork and high staff morale. These overall improvements demonstrate an outstanding capacity for further improvement. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive and are pleased to have chosen the school for their children. Their many positive comments are summed up by the parent who wrote: 'The school is good at nurturing individuals and has a strong family ethos. My children have flourished at St Paul's because it provides a secure, well-rounded education for our children and they have a lot of fun.'

The school's recent emphasis on involving pupils in their learning is paying dividends. The quality of teaching and learning in most lessons is good and some lessons are outstanding. Throughout the school, teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and they manage them well. They generally provide exciting activities that are well-matched to pupils' learning needs and this captures the pupils' imagination and interest. Teachers are adept in ensuring that pupils have a clear understanding of what is being taught and also what they need to do in order to meet lesson objectives. Assessments are used well, though on occasion too little notice is taken of them to make sure future work is sufficiently demanding. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and reach standards above those expected. Progress is also good in Years 3 to 6 with pupils achieving well and attaining standards at the end of the key stage that are above the national average, and, on occasion, such as in English in 2007, exceptionally high. These standards reflect good achievement in relation to pupils' starting points. Because there has been an excellent focus on strengthening provision, standards are rising. Current Year 6 pupils are on course to attain standards that are high particularly in English and mathematics. The proportion of pupils on course to attain the higher level is much above national expectations.

There have been considerable changes made to the curriculum since the previous inspection. It is of good quality because, as well as ensuring that all the required areas are successfully covered, staff have started to link subjects together in order to make learning more meaningful. Projects are made relevant and interesting, providing high challenge for more able pupils and well-matched activities for those who find lessons more challenging or difficult. This encourages pupils to develop their initiative, skills, knowledge and understanding very well. Themed weeks such as those for French, environmental week and 'inspirations' add to pupils' enjoyment. The school recognises that topic plans now need to be developed throughout the school for all the themes being studied. In addition, learning is made real by the excellent range of visitors to the school and trips out, including residential trips. The school's commitment to providing a wide range of sporting opportunities is shown in the gaining of the Activemark award.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. This is the direct result of the outstanding care, guidance and support provided. Staff take great care to ensure that all pupils are encouraged to develop their excellent personal skills and that the school provides a very happy and harmonious community. In consequence, pupils are growing into confident, secure, independent and friendly young people. Their behaviour is outstanding both in lessons and around the school. They delight in taking on responsibility as members of the influential school council, eco-committee or as part of the playground squad who help younger children to enjoy lunchtimes. As one Year 6 school councillor said, 'We don't want anyone in our school to feel sad at any time.' Teachers treat the pupils with care and consideration while making clear their high expectations of both behaviour and work. Pupils have an excellent appreciation of healthy lifestyles and this is shown in the school being re-accredited with the 'Healthy Schools' award. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the community both in the school and beyond. This enhances the school's outstanding contribution to community cohesion. There are positive links with the Parish Council with pupils helping to gain 'green flag' status for the common and by planning the new village playground. In addition, the school has links with a large school in Wembley which provides pupils with the opportunity to taste city living in a multi-ethnic community. There are also positive links with two schools in Mexico and Ruanda.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children enter the school with knowledge and skills that are just below those expected for their age. Excellent teaching, detailed planning and clear expectations support learning development very well and promote outstanding progress. Children's welfare is a top priority and staff respond sensitively to the needs of each individual so that the children are confident to approach adults. Personal development is excellent and is enhanced by a good balance of activities directed by adults and those chosen by the children. Staff have high expectations of children's ability to work independently and even the youngest children confidently access equipment which they use appropriately in cooperation with their peers. All staff use good questioning strategies to encourage children to think hard about their learning. Consequently, children speak confidently and are developing a wide vocabulary in Reception which shows very good progress from the often poor vocabulary demonstrated by the youngest children in the Nursery. Children get off to a good start in reading and writing because of the strong emphasis placed on teaching the relationship between letters and sounds. The outdoor area provides many exciting activities that support learning effectively. For example, the children enjoyed using car racing tracks to discuss 'faster', 'slower', 'higher' and 'lower'.

Leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding. The high quality provision in both classes is based on thorough knowledge of the development of children's learning and the careful assessments made of each child's progress and needs. Staff record children's progress carefully and use assessments well to plan the next steps in learning. Individual 'learning journals', which are shared with parents, summarise the staff's knowledge of each child exceptionally well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen pupils' progress and learning by ensuring that teachers consistently make use of their assessments to ensure that future work is challenging for all groups of pupils.

- Develop curricular plans to ensure that future themes and topics are as well planned as those currently being undertaken.

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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?	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
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?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	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?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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

6 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Paul's Chipperfield Church of England Primary School, Kings Langley, WD4 9BS

I am writing to let you know what we found when we visited your school. Thank you for helping us so well and making us welcome. We really enjoyed talking with you and finding out about your school. We can understand why you are excited about the new classrooms which will make your accommodation even better! We can see why you enjoy school so much because yours is a good school.

These are the things that are best about your school.

- You enjoy school and you all get on very well together. Your behaviour is excellent and you help and support each other really well.
- You make good progress in your learning and want to do your best. Well done for this!
- The staff take excellent care of you and make sure that you are safe and very well looked after.
- Your teachers do a good job. Teaching is good and you thoroughly enjoy learning.
- You are lucky to have such well-planned activities to do. We were pleased to hear how many of you enjoy the residential visits and taking part in the wide range of sports activities that are available for you.
- Your headteacher is doing an excellent job. She is supported really well by all the other adults in the school.

We have asked the school to continue to focus on two things:

- making sure that your teachers always provide activities that are challenging for you
- completing the job of planning future topics so that they are as exciting as those you are studying now.

You can help by making sure you work as hard as possible to meet your targets.

Yours faithfully

Keith Sadler

Lead inspector