

St Paul's with St Michael's Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100269
Local Authority	
Inspection number	335516
Inspection dates	15–16 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Margaret Goodchild

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Dr Alan Everett
Headteacher	Mr Tom Panagiotopoulos
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons, briefly sampled a few other lessons and held meetings with the chair of governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, data about attainment and progress, planning, information from the school's own monitoring and other documentation. Inspectors received and analysed 21 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- Whether all groups of pupils are making at least satisfactory progress.
- How well teachers use assessment information to match work to the learning needs of different groups of pupils.
- How well leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, monitor the school's work and use the resulting information to drive school improvement.

Information about the school

The school is a little smaller than most primary schools. A very high proportion of its pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest group is of Black or Black British African heritage; the next largest groups are from Black or Black British Caribbean and White British backgrounds. Around half the pupils speak English as an additional language, which is very high compared with schools nationally. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that of most schools. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery class and a Reception class. The school recently gained the Healthy Schools award. A new headteacher took up post a year ago.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a satisfactory and improving school. Pupils learn in an attractive environment, made stimulating by displays of their work and vibrant photographs that celebrate the school's culturally diverse intake. A warm and caring ethos permeates the school and staff provide pupils with a good level of care, guidance and support. Attendance rates are above average, pupils enjoy coming to school and they have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils behave well and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Most parents and pupils express positive views about the school. One pupil wrote, 'Since I started Reception, the teachers have been kind to me and have cared about me all the way through to Year 6: I enjoy coming to school because it is fun and friendly.'

Children join the school with attainment that is low compared with expectations for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and move up to Year 1 with attainment that is average in most areas of learning. Standards have been broadly average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in recent years. The school has introduced some well-chosen initiatives in an attempt to raise standards and these have begun to bring about improvement. Although over a third of the pupils who took Year 6 tests in 2009 had special educational needs and/or disabilities, there was an increase in standards in English and a significant improvement in mathematics, where pupils' performance was above average. The school has met its targets for the last three years. Predictions for 2010 suggest that pupils are likely to meet and possibly exceed their targets at the end of Year 6.

In some classes, teaching meets pupils' needs well but inconsistencies in teaching mean that teaching and pupils' learning and progress are satisfactory overall. A concerted effort to raise standards in reading has begun to bring about improvement in all years but, otherwise, efforts to raise standards are proving most effective in Years 3 to 6. Whilst pupils often make good progress in Key Stage 2, they do less well in Key Stage 1. This is because teachers do not always match work sufficiently to the prior attainment of different groups of pupils. At times, learning objectives are not sharp enough and some activities do not provide pupils with the best means of increasing their skills, knowledge and understanding.

The ambition and drive of senior leaders is evident in a number of improvements since the last inspection, and the school is well placed to improve further. The new headteacher and governors have worked together well to establish a positive ethos and to strengthen partnership with parents. A great deal of work has been done to develop coherent assessment systems so that there is now a wealth of data from which to form judgements about the school's effectiveness. Assessment information is used well by senior leaders to match the curriculum to the needs of different groups of pupils and to

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track the progress of individuals on a half-termly basis. Teachers are being held increasingly to account for the progress their pupils make, but assessment information is used less well to keep a continuous check on the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils. A great deal of monitoring takes place, including regular lesson observations and weekly scrutiny of pupils' books. The findings have been used successfully to tackle some inadequate teaching but monitoring is not yet as rigorous as it should be in identifying the impact of teaching on learning and pupils' progress. A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement and the quality of learning, especially in Key Stage 1, by:
 - ensuring teachers use assessment information to match tasks to the prior attainment of different groups of pupils
 - sharpening learning objectives and choosing those teaching methods and activities that are most likely to enable pupils to meet the objectives.
- Increase the amount of teaching that is at least good, by:
 - identifying more clearly the key strengths and weaknesses in teaching that emerge from monitoring lessons, teachers' planning and pupils' work
 - extending the analysis of data to keep a continuous check on the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and progress is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in some classes in Key Stage 2. A range of strategies to raise achievement in reading has begun to bring about improvement throughout the school. There are early signs of improvement in writing, which is a current priority for development. This was evident in a good lesson in Key Stage 2 where pupils responded well to the teacher's probing questions about how a piece of writing could be made more lively by imaginative choice of vocabulary. They moved off to start work on their own writing with a clear understanding about how improve it. The school is meeting with success in Years 3 to 6 in its efforts to raise achievement in mathematics. The effects of this were apparent in the improved mathematics results in Year 6 in 2009 but improvement in mathematics is not yet evident lower down the school. Gifted and talented pupils have had good opportunities to develop skills by working with a playwright, a film maker, an exhibiting artist and a drama teacher. Intervention programmes, group and one-to-one support are effective in helping lower attaining pupils to fill gaps in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. Although there is some variation from year to year in the performance of boys and girls and different ethnic groups, there is no significant

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difference in their progress.

In discussion with pupils, they show that they care greatly for their school and they speak with enthusiasm about the clubs and other activities available to them. Diverse cultures are celebrated and pupils' relationships show that they respect others from different backgrounds. They say that they feel very safe and that incidents of bullying are rare and dealt with well. Their behaviour is usually good. Pupils usually show a good level of self-discipline, cooperate and try hard. They enjoy learning and their concentration in lessons is generally good. Pupils readily take part in a range of physical activities, including football, dance and tennis. The school council is active and pupils' contribution to the school community is good. They benefit from strong links with the church, collect food for the homeless, sing carols at a local old people's home and take part in regular recycling activities. Pupils' grasp of basic skills and their effective personal qualities equip them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Throughout the school, teachers make good use of practical resources and interactive

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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whiteboards to capture pupils' interest. Teachers successfully encourage pupils to share ideas with talk partners, which is particularly beneficial for those learning English as an additional language. At times, too much emphasis is given to paired work, however, reducing the opportunity for pupils to think for themselves and practise their individual recording skills. The best teaching proceeds at a fast pace, with a strong focus on developing pupils' basic skills. At times, teachers are either overambitious in the range of activities they try to pack into a lesson or, in contrast, expect too little of the pupils. Improved tracking and assessment procedures mean that teachers have detailed information about pupils' prior attainment, but this information is not consistently used to plan work that is matched to the needs of different groups of pupils. The school has a number of skilled teaching assistants who make a good contribution to pupils' progress. Clear learning targets are pasted into pupils' exercise books and some marking gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work. The school has, rightly, identified the need to ensure that all teachers mark to this level. In Year 6, the regular time provided for pupils to respond to the teacher's assessment comments is a contributory factor in their good progress in English and mathematics.

Suitable emphasis is given to literacy and numeracy, and a recent move to link learning across subjects is beginning to have an impact on pupils' achievement, for instance, providing increased motivation for writing. Pupils have good opportunities to go on educational visits, to take part in special events such as business and enterprise activities and learn about different cultures. A wide range of after-school clubs, including sports, art, foreign language tuition, dance, games, homework and gardening, enriches the curriculum well and pupils in Year 6 enjoy the residential trip. Links with other schools extend learning opportunities effectively.

Attention to the personal needs and circumstances of individual pupils is key to the very good pastoral care. Effective systems are in place to identify pupils who need additional help and staff work very well with outside agencies, parents and carers. A full-time learning mentor and social worker provide valuable support to vulnerable pupils and their families.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Since taking up the appointment, the headteacher has driven improvement well at a whole school level, establishing comprehensive assessment systems and improving the

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curriculum so that it is a better match to the full range of pupils' learning needs. Restructuring the senior leadership team has increased its capacity, and the leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and English as an additional language is good. Senior leaders have stepped up the amount of monitoring that is undertaken in an effort to improve the quality of teaching to raise standards. This has met with some success but the identification of strengths and weaknesses in day-to-day classroom practice is not yet rigorous enough to eliminate inconsistencies and some continued shortcomings in teaching.

Parents value the inclusive ethos of the school and their support is reflected in a recent increase in pupil numbers. The school regularly canvases parents' and pupils' views and takes their ideas into account. It works very well to promote a sense of cohesion in the school and local community and has some global links. National links are less well developed and the school has not yet evaluated how well it promotes community cohesion or set out a plan of action to enhance this further. Nonetheless, the celebration of diversity is a strength of the school and racial harmony amongst pupils helps to make the school a happy place. The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory: variation in the quality of teaching means that pupils do not currently have an equal chance to achieve as well as possible in some classes.

Governors support and challenge the school well. The governing body is active in promoting the school within the local community and includes within its membership a number of parent governors. The school gives high priority to ensuring the safety and welfare of its pupils. Safeguarding procedures meet current guidelines and the school has a full range of policies that help to keep pupils safe. Very good attention is paid to child protection and to systematic risk assessments.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and involvement in a local authority project to raise achievement in communication, language and literacy is having a very positive effect on their development. In a highly effective lesson in the Reception class, children showed an above average level of confidence in their knowledge of letters and sounds and in their ability to recite the alphabet.

Staff plan activities that interest the children and are matched well to their learning needs. Teaching and learning are consistently good in the Nursery class and often outstanding in the Reception class. This ensures that children reach broadly average standards by the time they move up to Year 1, despite their low starting points. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities and children have free access to the outdoor areas. The staff are very skilled in interacting with the children, simultaneously promoting their personal, social and emotional development and extending their language skills. As a result, the children are happy and confident. They enjoy learning and behave well. Good arrangements exist to ensure children's safety, health and well-being. Staff regularly observe and record information about children's learning; learning folders, containing photographs and notes about children's development, are easily accessible to parents and children. These provide a good opportunity for parents to contribute information about their children's home learning. Good leadership, based on continuous informal dialogue between the highly experienced staff, has enabled the school to sustain and build on the good provision identified at the last inspection.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents who returned a questionnaire are positive about the school and their child's enjoyment of school life. Most parents support the school strongly and have confidence in the headteacher and staff. They express a high level of satisfaction with the information the school provides and most parents think the school takes their views into account. A very few parents feel that their children are not making as much progress as they could. The findings of the inspection are in agreement with most of the views expressed by parents. The inspection found that pupils make

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satisfactory progress overall, but this is variable from class to class.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Paul's with St Michael's Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 21 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 177 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	81	2	10	2	10	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	15	71	5	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	12	57	8	38	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	62	6	29	1	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	12	57	8	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	76	4	19	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	71	5	24	1	5	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	12	57	6	27	1	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	57	8	38	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	57	8	33	1	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	43	10	48	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	76	4	19	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	76	4	19	1	5	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



19 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Paul's with St Michael's Primary School, Hackney, E8 4PB

I would like to thank you for making us welcome and being so helpful when we visited your school recently. You told us a lot about what you like doing, and it is clear that you enjoy school and think that your teachers make learning fun.

You go to a satisfactory school that is improving and already does some things well. Most of you are making steady progress with your work and in some classes you make good progress. Those of you in the Nursery and Reception classes and in Year 6 do particularly well. By the time you leave, you are generally able to do the work expected for your age. The school provides you with exciting things to do and you told us that you particularly enjoy the clubs and visits. You are all well looked after and the school is good at helping those of you who need extra support. You behave well and we were glad to see how well you get on together. You have a good understanding of healthy eating and take part in many sporting activities. You told us that you feel very safe, and the school is really careful to make sure you are kept safe and protected.

The headteacher, senior managers and governors want to make the school as good as they can for you. In order to do this, we have asked them to:

- make sure you are given work that is exactly the right match for you ' not too difficult and not too easy
- make sure teachers think really carefully about how to teach you new things, so that you can make the best possible progress
- check your learning really carefully when they visit lessons and look at your books.

We are sure you will help to make the school even better by working hard and doing your best.

Yours faithfully

Ms M J Goodchild

Lead inspector

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