

St Paul's Church of England Primary School Brinnington

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106108
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	336619
Inspection dates	21–22 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Lynne Read

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs K Wikinson-Davies
Headteacher	Mrs Julie Bottomley
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and observed eight teachers. They held meetings with governors, managers, staff, groups of pupils and the School Improvement Partner. In observing the school's work, they looked at pupils' workbooks, assessment records, school policies and school development plans. In total, 91 parental questionnaires were received, analysed and considered, alongside 106 questionnaires completed by the pupils and 19 completed by staff.

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

- whether the recent improvements in pupils' achievement at Key Stage 2 were sustained
- whether achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 has improved
- the effectiveness of the school's assessment processes and how well the information gathered about pupils' progress is used to plan work.

Information about the school

This average-size school serves an urban area. Just over 30% of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Around 10% of pupils belong to minority ethnic groups and a very small minority are learning English as an additional language. An above-average number of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school holds the Healthy Schools award as well as commendations for the work done to provide extended care and for supporting pupils' reading.

The governors provide extended care sessions on the premises through a breakfast club and a playgroup for children aged two to three years. Registration with Ofsted was not required at the time of inspection because sessions were less than 2 hours. Both aspects of extended care were inspected and are reported on within the text.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good and improving school. The headteacher, ably assisted by the deputy headteacher, leads the successful drive for improvement; she generates good teamwork and a shared vision of excellence. Managers regularly complete thorough reviews of teaching and learning, and the school sets itself challenging targets. Standards have improved and are now broadly average by the end of Year 6. This represents good achievement from pupils' starting points. Some underachievement from previous years has been addressed. Progress in Key Stage 2 has accelerated and is significantly better than seen in most schools, especially for the older juniors. Pupils are now learning well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. However, the rate of progress varies between subjects and is slower in writing than in reading and mathematics. The recommendations from the previous report have been addressed and the capacity for sustained improvement is good.

Behaviour is good overall. It is often outstanding by Year 6 with pupils demonstrating mature attitudes and very good self-discipline. Pupils assert that they feel safe and that any bullying is dealt with swiftly. They have a very good awareness of moral and social issues and show respect for cultures and beliefs that are different from their own. Spiritual development is supported well through good links with the church. Work to promote community cohesion is successful at school and local community level, underpinning the harmonious relationships among the different ethnic and religious groups. However, there is little engagement with groups beyond the immediate community, and links with a school overseas are in the early stages of development. Consequently, pupils have only a basic awareness of their place in the world. Attendance is average and is improving.

Teaching is good overall. Some is outstanding but the school recognises that a small amount of satisfactory practice needs to be improved, especially the teaching of writing. In some instances, pupils do not have enough time or opportunity to write independently and, on occasions, writing tasks do not fully challenge all pupils, especially the more able. Pupils say they enjoy school, like their teachers, and receive lots of help. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who need a boost to their learning have personalised programmes that are specifically tailored to their needs. The curriculum is good and includes an interesting selection of activities out of school hours. The school provides a good standard of care for pupils and their welfare is at the heart of its work. Good measures are taken to secure expert help or resources to meet pupils' learning and personal needs, especially for those who are vulnerable.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve progress and attainment in writing, by:
 - ensuring that all pupils have enough time for independent writing
 - ensuring that writing tasks consistently challenge all pupils.
- Improve community cohesion by engaging with groups in the wider community and overseas.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils say they enjoy school and are happy. They listen well in lessons, sustain good concentration and work productively in groups or on their own. Achievement is good for all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language. On entry to Year 1, pupils' attainment is close to that typically expected but is weaker in early reading and writing skills. Progress in Key Stage 1 is good. An increased emphasis on learning about sounds and letters is helping to boost reading skills. with an increasing number of pupils working at the higher level. It is also having a positive impact on writing but the pace of improvement is slower here. All groups of pupils make good progress through Key Stage 2 where the pace of learning has accelerated considerably over the last two years. Special weekly sessions are beginning to promote better progress in writing but it is slower than in reading. The school has worked hard to improve boys' progress in Key Stage 1. As a result, the gap is closing between boys' attainment and that of girls. Behaviour is good and pupils say they feel safe. They know that the school does not tolerate any form of harassment or racism. A good programme for personal education ensures a good understanding of healthy living and pupils enjoy plenty of exercise. Attendance is much improved and is broadly average. Pupils are developing an understanding of managing money through various enterprise projects. Their basic skills are satisfactory and their attendance and punctuality are improving. They are soundly prepared for their future education and world of work. Good opportunities exist for pupils to experience responsibility. For example, play leaders and school councillors contribute much to the day-to-day running of school and to the process of decision-making.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good and there is excellent practice in some Key Stage 2 classes. Lessons have very clear objectives so pupils always know exactly what is expected of them. Teachers have a detailed view of pupils' progress and generally plan tasks to build accurately on pupils' prior learning. Lessons usually have good pace, but younger juniors are sometimes required to listen to the teacher for too long. This reduces the time for independent working, especially in writing. Teachers keep a careful check on progress and usually plan work to challenge all ability groups effectively. On occasions, however, writing tasks are narrow in focus and do not encourage pupils, especially the more able, to use all of their skills. Teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards to illustrate new ideas and concepts. Marking is helpful and good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own understanding are helping them to develop independent skills of learning. Pupils have useful targets for learning so they know where to focus their efforts. Very good use is made of 'marking ladders' to help pupils assess their own progress. This is helping them to become independent learners. Teaching assistants are very knowledgeable and well deployed to provide additional support, both in class and group sessions.

The good curriculum is well balanced. It includes French lessons as well as good opportunities for creative and practical work. For example, pupils especially enjoy their drama lessons and playing in the steel band. A strength of the curriculum lies in the tailoring of tasks and support to meet specific needs. A range of intervention programmes and individual tuition provide very good support for personal, academic and language development. Some planning makes very effective links between subjects.

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For example, skills in literacy, and information and communication technology are extended well through other subject studies, and links between history and literacy promote excellent learning. This type of topic work is a focus for further development across the school. Pupils take advantage of an interesting programme of extra-curricular clubs and competitive sport.

Good care, guidance and support are provided for pupils. Welfare arrangements are good and responses to questionnaires from pupils and parents overwhelmingly agree that children are safe. A majority of pupils have good records of attendance and staff investigate unexplained absences very quickly. The school is now working with a few families to improve attendance further and to reduce the incidence of holidays taken in term time. A good standard of care is provided in the breakfast club and this facility is helping to encourage better punctuality. The playgroup is very popular with parents and provides a very good start to children's education. The very skilled leader liaises closely with Nursery staff to ensure that planning and routines are consistent across both settings. This eases the transition into the Nursery and promotes the development of independent skills very well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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?

Senior managers provide clear direction and are constantly driving the school forward. The school is well run; procedures and policies are consistently followed and it gives good value for money. Regular observations of lessons are carried out and pupils' progress is tracked closely. A strong emphasis on teamwork leads to good sharing of expertise and experience. For example, staff from both key stages are organised into focus groups to manage subjects. This distributes the workload and ensures that the needs of all age groups are considered fully.

Community cohesion is satisfactory overall but work within the national and global contexts is not given enough emphasis. Safeguarding, including safe recruitment and child protection, is given a high priority and all requirements are fully met. Staff have regular updates in their child protection training and are well equipped to deal with any concerns. The school's equality policy is rigorously followed in practice and regularly evaluated to ensure that no barriers to learning exist. Good partnerships with outside agencies bring many benefits to pupils' education. For example, a local business has helped to develop the school grounds, pupils attend sporting tournaments at the

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secondary school and specialists help pupils to overcome difficulties in reading and writing. Links with the church enhance pupils' personal development well. Parents are encouraged to be partners in their children's education and family learning sessions provide them with ideas to support learning at home. Governors bring a wide range of skills to enhance management and have clear ambition. They are robust in discharging their statutory responsibilities, ensuring that the views of stakeholders are considered in any decision they make.

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	2
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	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's development on entry to the Nursery is below that typically expected, in particular in personal development, language and communication. Good induction procedures and links with the playgroup ensure that children settle quickly. Teaching is good and there is some outstanding practice in the Nursery. Planning takes careful account of children's interests in order to keep them well motivated. Tasks include varied opportunities, inside and out, for children to choose activities, explore their world and develop independence. The newly extended accommodation, attractive school grounds and a carefully chosen range of resources are used to create imaginative experiences for children. As a result, they make good progress and it is often excellent in terms of their personal skills. By the time they enter Year 1, children are working close to expected levels, but early reading and writing skills are below the level expected of their age. Staff are currently devoting extra attention to this area, with focused sessions on letters and varied opportunities for the children to write when engaged in free-choice work. Management is good and strong teamwork ensures that routines,

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policies and procedures are consistently followed. Evaluations of performance are carried out and welfare is maintained at a good level.

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 parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire have positive views and the very large majority are happy with their child's experience at the school. Quotes that reflect these views include, 'the staff are approachable and friendly', and, 'the school creates an atmosphere where children enjoy learning'. There are commendations for the good quality of teaching, leadership and management, and arrangements for safety. Inspectors agree with these views. A very small minority of parents and carers raised concerns about the information they receive concerning their children's progress. Inspectors find that a combination of 'meet the teacher' sessions, parents' evenings, reports and open afternoons provides good opportunities for informing parents. In addition, staff are freely available after school and the headteacher sees parents and carers on request, wherever possible.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Paul's Church of England Primary School Brinnington 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 91 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 237 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	71	21	23	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	61	67	30	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	54	59	30	33	6	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	56	33	36	5	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	63	69	22	24	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	52	57	33	36	5	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	57	63	29	32	5	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)	42	46	41	45	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	48	42	46	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	44	48	39	43	4	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	44	41	45	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	53	58	31	34	4	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	58	64	28	31	4	4	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



23 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Paul's CofE Primary School, Stockport SK5 8AA

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave my colleagues and me when we inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you and appreciated all the help you gave us. In return, I would like to tell you what we found out.

St Paul's Primary is a happy and safe school that provides you with a good education. You get on very well together and take good care of each other. You are a credit to your families and your school. Your council members ensure that your views are known and those of you with responsibilities, such as the play leaders, do a good job in the day-to-day running of the school. Thank you to the pupils who filled in their questionnaire and those who chatted with us. You are delighted with your school. You especially enjoy the residential trips in Years 4 and 6 and love your history lessons. The inspectors agree with your views that, 'the after-school clubs are great for exercise and fun'. It is good to know that you like your teachers and are proud of your school.

You are keen to learn, work hard and you make good progress. In writing, however, we think progress could be even better so we have asked your teachers to:

- make sure you all have enough time to write independently
- make sure that the writing tasks give you lots of challenge so you can use all the skills and knowledge you are learning in your English lessons.

We have asked your teachers to help you learn more about how different groups of people live in this country and overseas, hopefully by getting to know some of them.

You can help by continuing to work hard and being keen to learn.

Thank you once again for the interesting conversations we had and for letting us share your work and play.

Please accept my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lynne Read

Lead inspector

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