

# St Paul's CofE Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112406
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	337924
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Brian Dower

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	94
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Kathleen Henshaw
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs M McCulloch
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 February 2007
<b>School address</b>	Hawcoat Lane Barrow-in-Furness Cumbria LA14 4HF
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. He visited seven lessons and looked at a wide range of pupils' books. Meetings were held with the chair of governors, staff and groups of pupils, and a conversation was held with a representative of the local authority. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at the 56 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, together with the 88 completed by students and the nine completed by staff. He also reviewed a range of documents, including the school's analysis of pupils' academic progress and attainment, safeguarding information, improvement plans and the school's self-evaluation document.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at the following:

- the effectiveness of assessment and teaching on pupils' progress and attainment
- the impact of the curriculum on developing pupils' basic skills
- the impact of leaders to effect change and improvement
- the effectiveness of leaders in providing appropriate safeguarding, care, guidance and support and equal opportunities.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. That of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, although the percentage with a statement of special educational need is above average. The proportion of pupils who originate from outside the United Kingdom is well below average and a small number of these speak English as a second language. None are at the early stage of learning the language. Very few pupils start at or leave the school part way through their primary education. The school has the Artsmark Silver, the Healthy Schools and the Sports Activemark awards and is a Creative Partnership Enquiry School.

**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 school with several outstanding features. Standards are above average. Given pupils' average attainment when they join the school at the start of Year 3, their achievement is good. There are vulnerable pupils who make outstanding progress in their personal and academic development. The quality of the work in lessons, in pupils' books and the school's assessment records show that standards remain above expected levels. Learning and progress are good for all groups, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the very small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are excellent. Their enjoyment of school is evident from their above average attendance and their punctual arrival at school. Many arrive early for music and sport. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school and wider community and their spiritual, moral and social development is exceptional.

Teaching is good overall and at times outstanding. There are times when pupils' learning in the subjects other than English, mathematics and science is held back because learning objectives lack precision and clarity and pupils are unsure what is expected of them. There are no planned opportunities for pupils to use and improve their basic skills across all areas of the curriculum. Neither are there any monitoring strategies to ensure this happens and is done consistently and well. The work of the teaching assistants is outstanding in giving the most vulnerable pupils the confidence and sense of security to enable them to learn effectively. The curriculum is good and provision to enrich and extend pupils' experiences is exceptional. Pupils' creative development is outstanding, evident in the quality of their art work and the enthusiasm that many have for music. The learning and personal needs of every pupil are known by every adult working in the school. As a result, the care and support pupils receive is exceptional and underpins their good academic and excellent personal development.

Pupils thrive in this school because of good leadership and management at all levels, particularly the excellent leadership provided by the headteacher. There is a strong sense of common purpose. Staff are committed to the school's success and ensuring that every pupil has an equal chance. The school has an accurate picture of how well it is doing but is modest about some of its accomplishments. There are close and effective links with parents and carers who are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work. The school is a calm and purposeful place in which to work. The school's capacity to improve further is good because of the gains made since the previous inspection in a range of provision and in outcomes. The school gives good value for money.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards by:
  - ensuring learning objectives in all areas of the curriculum are challenging, precisely defined and communicated to pupils clearly
  - implementing action to ensure that pupils' basic skills are being developed in all areas of the curriculum and closely monitoring the success of this action.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The proportion of pupils attaining at the higher Level 5 in the Year 6 national mathematics' tests this year dipped to below average. The school was quick and effective in addressing this underachievement. As a result, in the current Year 6 pupils' mathematics work confirms that at least one third of pupils are close to attaining this higher level. All pupils are on course to reach Level 4. A key issue from the previous inspection was to raise standards in pupils' writing. This has been done and in 2008 performance targets were exceeded in English. Targets were met in mathematics and science that year. Pupils have good basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). However, they are not using those skills extensively across all subjects. For example, pupils are not practising their graphical skills, but are reliant on printed charts which are then pasted into their books. Their speaking and listening skills are good and these are used well across the curriculum. They work well collaboratively and independently, evident from their involvement in the Forest Schools' Initiative, which is broadening their understanding of science and the environment.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and inspection evidence shows they are. They have a good understanding of how to keep fit and well and they eat healthily and take plenty of exercise. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education because they have excellent personal qualities and good basic skills. Pupils' cultural development is good. They have a good understanding of the diversity of society and respect those from backgrounds other than their own or who are different in any way.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> 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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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good. Monitoring and assessment information on pupils' progress is used well to plan the next stages in learning and lesson activities are structured in difficulty to take account of all needs. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, blended with an encouraging and supportive approach. The outstanding teaching of mathematics was characterised by the pace and challenge of the teacher's questioning and ability to engage and enthuse the pupils. For 35 minutes all 23 faces were riveted on him. Generally, questions to test recall and understanding is good, but limited use is made of the open-ended 'how', 'why' and 'what if' questions to get pupils reflecting further on their work and engaging in debate. Learning objectives sometimes lack precision and, therefore, pupils cannot see for themselves how well they have done in a particular lesson.

The school rightly identifies extending the use of basic skills across the curriculum as a way to raise standards but this is not being done consistently. There are highly effective intervention strategies in place to tackle any weaknesses in pupils' learning. Teaching assistants patiently guide and nurture these youngsters, taking them forward step by small step in a warm and supportive way. This engenders confidence and a feeling for what success is like. The curriculum meets pupils' needs well and is in line with statutory requirements. The provision for pupils' creative development is exceptional, as is the range and quality of well attended extra-curricular activities which do much for pupils' enjoyment and self-worth. The choir is active in the local and wider community and the art on display around the school is impressive.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. This is a small, caring community where

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each individual pupil is valued and respected. Pupils say they are well cared for and that they like their teachers and the assistants and can talk through any problems with them.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

In this small school, all staff have a part to play in managing its day-to-day operations and they do so effectively and efficiently. The newly appointed assistant headteachers are already having a positive impact on pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Their good leadership skills have resulted in significant improvements in pupils' reading ability through the 'Power of Reading' project and in getting pupils enthusiastic about mathematics. The headteacher has demonstrated exceptional skills in developing the leadership potential of others, in securing significant improvements in provision and outcomes and in remaining calm and measured in dealing with challenges in order to inspire others with confidence when difficulties arise.

Governance is good. Governors know the school well and give generously of their time to meetings and many school events. The excellent links with parents and carers ensure that pupils have consistent support and encouragement in school and out. Good safeguarding procedures ensure pupils' safety. Risk assessments are carried out for all appropriate activities and health and safety audits conducted regularly. The school evaluates its work rigorously and accurately, taking account of the religious, social and cultural values of the local and wider community it serves. This has resulted in an outstanding contribution to community cohesion.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The following represent the views of the overwhelming majority of parents and carers.

- All three of our children have been pupils at St Paul's. I cannot speak highly enough of the commitment and concern for each of our children's education and welfare from the school's staff.
- We have always felt that the caring, nurturing environment within the school is one of its greatest strengths and that, along with the quality of the teaching staff, was the reason we chose St Paul's school for our two children.
- I think the school is excellent. It is well led and benefits from being a small community with a Christian ethos.
- Since joining St Paul's in September 2009 my child thoroughly enjoys all aspects of school life and is making excellent progress.
- My daughter has some difficulties in some areas of learning. Not only has this been detected but also acted upon and lots of strategies tried.



### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Paul's CofE Junior 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 94 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	67	19	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	48	83	9	16	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	64	20	34	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	57	23	40	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	39	67	18	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	59	23	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	52	27	47	1	2	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)	32	55	23	40	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	64	21	36	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	64	21	36	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	55	26	45	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	67	19	33	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	72	16	28	0	0	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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



30 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Paul's Church of England Junior School,  
Barrow-in-Furness, LA14 4HF

Thank you for the warm welcome I received when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed the time I spent with you and only wish I had had more time to see all the interesting things you are doing. You told me a lot about your work in the Wildlife Garden and how much you enjoyed the mathematics week.

Yours is a good school with several things that are outstanding. You work hard and get on well with each other, your teachers and the assistants. The standard of your work is higher than that normally seen in primary schools. As a result, you make good progress and are laying the foundations for your future success. I was impressed with the quality of the art work on display and I thoroughly enjoyed the Friday celebration assembly. I am not surprised that the choir is in such demand to sing to groups in the local community.

Most of you completed and returned the questionnaire. The word 'fun' was used a lot to describe your lessons and the teachers, and many of you said how much you enjoy the trips out and the clubs and activities. You made a point of saying that your teachers are there for you if you get stuck with your work. I agree that the teachers and the teaching assistants work hard to support and care for you.

Even in such a good school there are always things to improve. I have asked that at the start of every lesson it is always made clear what you are to learn so that you know what is expected of you. It is important that you practise your writing and numeracy skills as much as possible and I have asked that you be given opportunities to do so in all subjects.

I know that you will continue to play your part in making St Paul's such an enjoyable school to learn in. My best wishes to you all.

Yours sincerely

Mr Brian Dower

Lead Inspector

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