

St Pauls CofE VA Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	110839
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	378186
Inspection dates	5–6 July 2012
Lead inspector	Edward Wheatley

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	192
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Scoffin
Headteacher	Stephen Jordan
Date of previous school inspection	18 March 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Edward Wheatley

Additional Inspector

Lynn Lowery

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed nine teachers and visited 16 lessons or parts of lessons. Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and pupils, and inspectors spoke to parents and carers bringing their children to school. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at achievement information, development planning and self-evaluation records. They took into account 86 parental questionnaires, and also questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

St Paul's C of E Primary is a smaller-than-average school. Pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. An above-average proportion of pupils do not speak English as their first language, but only a small number are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action plus is well below average, and a very small number have statements of special educational needs. A much larger than average proportion of pupils leave or join the school other than at the usual times during the year. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school manages and runs an after-school club.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- St Paul's C of E Primary is a good school. It is good rather than outstanding because occasionally teaching is not always sufficiently challenging and the pace of learning is not fast enough.
- Pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 6 and is rising. Their progress is good, and it is improving, especially in Key Stage 1. Pupils read, speak and write well and have good mathematical skills, although sometimes their spelling and punctuation are careless. Children in the Reception class make good progress.
- Teaching is good. Lessons are interesting and encourage pupils' enthusiasm to learn. Occasionally, work is not matched closely to pupils' learning needs and in some lessons teachers talk for too long so that pupils do not settle to their own work quickly enough.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are generally good. Bullying is rare and is generally dealt with well. A very small number of pupils with specific learning difficulties occasionally misbehave or bully other pupils, and parents are not always informed about how these incidents have been dealt with. The school takes good care of its pupils and ensures they are safe.
- Leaders accurately evaluate the schools' strengths and weaknesses. The actions taken to deal with past underachievement, especially in mathematics, have been effective. Leaders manage teachers' performance management well. They provide extensive professional support to improve the quality of teaching.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to the quality of the best seen by ensuring:
 - work is always challenging and matched to the learning needs of pupils
 - teachers reduce the time they talk and enable pupils to settle to their own

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- work quickly
 - pupils review their written work to make sure they spell and punctuate accurately.
- Improve communication immediately with parents to ensure they know, within the bounds of confidentiality, how the school has responded to incidents of bullying and unacceptable behaviour.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' progress is good at both key stages from broadly average starting points. Progress is improving, especially in Key Stage 1 where until recently it was average. Boys' progress has improved and is now similar to that of girls, and the progress made by the most-able pupils has also improved, especially in mathematics. Learning in most lessons is good and leads to good gains in knowledge and understanding. Pupils' positive attitudes also play an important part in helping them make progress. For example, in an English lesson, pupils of all abilities gained good knowledge and understanding of Shakespeare's play *Macbeth* by linking features of the story into a logical order and then successfully relating their work to the sequence of the actual play. They joined in activities enthusiastically and by the end of the lesson showed a good knowledge of the play's plot. In addition, they listened to each other well, and collaborated effectively in outlining their own interpretations of the play.

Attainment is above average by the end of Years 2 and 6, and rising. In the past, too few pupils reached Level 5 at Key Stage 2 and Level 3 at Key Stage 1 in mathematics, but this is no longer the case and attainment of the most-able pupils is similar in English and mathematics. Pupils read well and by the end of Years 2 and 6 have above-average reading skills. They use phonic skills (links between letters of the alphabet and sounds) well to read unfamiliar words. They write imaginatively and in a wide range of styles. They construct arguments and explanations and use complex sentences in their writing well. Pupils' handwriting is generally good and easy to read. However, they do not always check their writing to make sure they spell or punctuate their work accurately. Pupils' numeracy skills are above average, and have improved fast over the year because the school has successfully focused on developing pupils' calculating skills.

Pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs make good progress compared with similar pupils nationally. Pupils joining the school during the year, and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress. This is because there are well-established approaches to help pupils settle into classes, to provide individual support where it is needed, and to encourage independent learning.

In Reception, children make good progress. Their progress in personal, social and

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emotional development is especially good. Progress is good in developing literacy and communication skills, and children's writing, the relatively weaker area, is improving with the school's increased focus on developing children's skills in this area.

Parents and carers are generally pleased with their children's progress. A few feel progress is limited where children have special needs. Inspectors found that, typically, pupils identified with particular needs are well supported within lessons and through one-to-one support where needed.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is generally good. The great majority of lessons are well planned with work that is closely matched to pupils' learning needs. Occasionally, however, the teaching does not fully meet the needs of all pupils, being either too difficult for lower-attaining pupils or too easy for the most able. In the majority of lessons, the pace of learning is fast but, in a small proportion, teachers talk for too long and are slow to engage pupils in their own learning activities. Teachers teach phonics well so that pupils make good progress in reading. Teaching is best where work is challenging and pupils are encouraged to follow their own lines of enquiry. For example, in a mathematics lesson on measuring and the value of different units, pupils were given a challenging task that required them to work out the relationships between different measurements provided. It was successful in making them discuss how values given in, for example, tonnes, kilograms and grams, equated with each other. Other pupils carried out tasks to consolidate their understanding of decimal fractions well through calculating how much of certain foods athletes ate in a day. In doing the tasks, pupils worked closely together carrying out calculations and collaborated over what information was relevant. This contributed well to their social and cultural development, and in developing good relationships between pupils from different backgrounds.

Teachers' marking gives pupils clear information about how well they make progress and what the next steps in learning are. Pupils follow guidance they are given and have a secure grasp of their targets. The curriculum is well organised. It provides many opportunities to consolidate and develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and communication skills, and is enriched with fascinating activities that contribute significantly to pupils' enthusiasm for learning. The recent activities studying the Tudors, Shakespeare, aspects of science related to the Olympics, and visits to art galleries, play a significant part in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The quality of support for pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs is effective, and helps pupils to become independent learners. Support for other pupils who briefly underachieve or lose interest in learning is good, and helps re-engage their enthusiasm and efforts. Support for pupils who speak English as an additional language, many of whom join the school during the year, helps them to learn skills in English language quickly.

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Teaching in Reception is good. Adults are sensitive to children's social and learning needs and provide a well-planned curriculum that helps children acquire good social skills and confidence to learn well.

Parents and carers are generally pleased with teaching, although a few are critical of how well pupils' learning needs are met. Inspectors agree that generally teaching is good, although occasionally it is not challenging enough.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The majority of pupils enjoy school and their behaviour is good. Attendance is above average and rising. The great majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying. In discussion, they say they nearly always feel safe at school, and that the school deals with incidents well. In the returned questionnaires, some pupils, parents and carers say that sometimes learning is disrupted by unacceptable behaviour by a small number of pupils, and that sometimes these pupils bully other pupils, mainly at lunchtimes. Inspectors identified the very small number of pupils involved – the same ones the school identifies. Although these pupils very occasionally start to interrupt learning or bully other pupils, the school deals with their misbehaviour quickly and well, and often confidentially. As a result of the school's work, the behaviour of these pupils is improving quickly. However, the school does not keep pupils, parents and carers well-enough informed about the steps it has taken, so they are not sure what action has been taken. The personal, social and health education programme promotes tolerance and respect for pupils from different backgrounds effectively. The school takes good care of its pupils, and especially so of pupils and families whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. Pupils who attend the after-school activities and club are well cared for.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides good direction for the school's improvement. Leaders accurately identify weaknesses and successfully implement actions to deal with them. Attainment and progress are improving, and the gaps in progress between boys and girls, and pupils of different abilities have narrowed. Attendance has improved. Teaching is good and improving, and all staff participate in a wide range of professional development activities. The school works well to ensure all pupils have equal opportunities to do well. The governing body is well informed and involved in helping the school to improve. Most members visit the school regularly and support the school at parents' consultations and other events. The governing body holds the headteacher and other leaders to account for pupils' performance. Safeguarding requirements are fully met and the school tackles all forms of discrimination effectively. The trend in improvement in recent years indicates a strong capacity for further improvement.

The curriculum is well managed and, along with assemblies and the wide range of

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trips and visitors, promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Despite the concerns of a few, parents and carers are generally pleased with the school. The school works well to support parents and carers in helping their children make good progress. Newsletters and special events, for example, in mathematics and English, promote parents' and carers' abilities to support their children. Many listen to readers, attend assemblies, and support and sometimes organise trips for pupils.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



9 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Pauls CofE VA Primary School, Cambridge, CB2 1HJ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school, and for sharing your views with us. We think your school is good and improving and you make good progress.

The following things are particular strengths of your school.

- Teaching is usually good and the school provides a wide range of activities, trips and visitors that makes learning interesting.
- The staff and governing body know what the school needs to do to improve further, and work hard to make sure the improvements happen.
- Your behaviour is good. You know about the different forms of bullying, and although you know bullying happens occasionally, you say it is dealt with well.
- Your attendance is above average.
- The school takes good care of you.

In order for the school to continue to improve, we have asked your teachers to do several things.

- Make sure work is always challenging.
- Make sure you settle to your own work quickly in lessons.
- Provide you with opportunities to review your own work and make sure spelling and punctuation are always accurate.
- Improve how the school lets you and your families know how bullying and unacceptable behaviour have been sorted out.

You can help by telling teachers if you find work too easy, and by checking your work to make sure you spell and punctuate your work accurately.

Yours sincerely

Edward Wheatley
Lead inspector

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