

St Paul's Catholic Primary School

Park Lane, Cheshunt, EN7 6LR

Inspection dates

28 February–1 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils make better progress in some classes than others and in recent years, some pupils have not done well enough in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching does not enable pupils to make consistently good progress throughout the school.
- In Years 1 to 4, teachers do not always match work to the needs of different groups of pupils or use their teaching assistants to full effect.
- At times, staff do not question pupils carefully to check their understanding, and teachers do not get them to follow up the advice in their marking.
- Until recently, leaders and governors have not succeeded in tackling all the issues for improvement identified at the previous inspection.
- Some of the teachers responsible for subjects or areas of work are at an early stage in developing their leadership skills.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They move up to Year 1 with attainment that is above national expectations.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 have been above average in recent years.
- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6, with some that is outstanding.
- Pupils behave well and say that they feel safe in school.
- The school makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The new headteacher has made a very good start in working to improve teaching, raise standards and expectations. She is supported well by other senior leaders and there is a strong sense of purpose amongst all the staff.
- Pupils now learn in a vibrant environment and there is a very positive atmosphere in the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 15 lessons, five jointly with the headteacher. They observed a whole school and classroom assembly, watched pupils in the playground, sampled pupils' work and listened to younger pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other leaders, with the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, and with a group of pupils. A telephone discussion took place with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspection team took account of the 25 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and analysed questionnaires completed by five members of staff.
- Inspectors looked at the school's work and at documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, its development plan, and information about pupils' attainment and progress. They also looked at records relating to aspects of behaviour and safeguarding, and at teachers' planning.

Inspection team

Margaret Goodchild, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Isobel Randall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average but the proportion speaking English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding which is additional government funding (in this case, for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- An Ofsted monitoring visit in June 2011 found that the school had made satisfactory improvement since its last inspection in October 2009 and had satisfactory capacity to improve.
- Following the retirement of the previous headteacher, a new headteacher took up post in September 2012. At the beginning of this term, a new teacher joined the school in Year 6, one class is currently being taught by a supply teacher and another by a newly qualified teacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and increase the amount that is good or better in Years 1 to 4 by:
 - ensuring teachers always match work to the learning needs of the different groups of pupils in their class and provide enough challenge for more-able pupils
 - making full use of teaching assistants in lessons and planning precisely how they are to support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs
 - developing the way teachers and teaching assistants use questioning to make sure that pupils understand the ideas that underlie the work that they are given to do
 - ensuring that pupils make full use of the comments in teachers' marking to move their learning on.
- Increase the rate of pupils' progress and raise standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 by:
 - providing more opportunities for investigation and problem solving in mathematics
 - encouraging pupils to produce written work that is more imaginative and includes exciting vocabulary
 - improving pupils' grasp of grammar and punctuation and providing a greater focus on the way they structure their ideas
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills across a range of subjects and topics.
- Strengthen leadership and management in order to improve teaching and increase the school's effectiveness by:
 - ensuring leaders and governors hold teachers firmly to account for matching learning to the needs of all pupils in their class

- developing the leadership skills of teachers who are responsible for subjects so that they make a greater contribution to the drive to raise achievement
 - making sure that the two newly appointed special educational needs co-ordinators are fully trained to fulfil their roles.
-

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Although mathematics results improved last year, overall standards at the end of Year 6 have remained broadly average. Some pupils have made less progress than they should have done in English and mathematics during their time in Years 3 to 6.
- The school predicts that pupils currently in Year 6 should again reach average standards. Pupils are now making rapid progress in Years 5 and 6, but some have gaps in their knowledge and skills because they did not learn as much as they should have done lower down the school. The school's own data, pupils' work and lesson observations show that pupils are not all making or exceeding the amount of progress expected in Years 1 to 4.
- Pupils are not all confident in carrying out investigations or in solving problems for themselves in mathematics. In English, pupils' written work is not always as imaginative as it could be, including their choice of words. Some work is not structured well enough to communicate a clear sequence of ideas or is let down by mistakes in grammar and punctuation. Pupils do not get enough opportunities in all years to develop their literacy and numeracy across a range of subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are at school action or have a statement of special educational needs generally make good progress. However, the progress of pupils at school action requires improvement in some lessons. This is because work is not always matched to their needs, and teachers do not make full use of their teaching assistants or plan precisely how they are to support pupils.
- Children enter the Nursery with attainment that is typical for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning in the Nursery and Reception classes and move up to Year 1 with attainment that is above expectations. This marks a substantial improvement since the previous inspection.
- In the recent national screening test of pupils' reading skills in Year 1, the school's results were above average. Standards at the end of Year 2 have been significantly above average in two out of the last three years, and have improved since the previous inspection when they were broadly average. In 2012, attainment was well above average in writing, above average in mathematics and broadly average in reading.
- Artwork throughout the school is of high quality. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children produce very expressive paintings and in Years 1 to 6, work inspired by a range of other artists shows well-developed observation and good research skills.
- Until September 2012, the school did not make direct use of its pupil premium funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. These pupils performed well below their classmates at the end of Year 2 in 2012. However, they made faster progress in Years 3 to 6 and their attainment (based on the average points they scored) was only slightly below that of the rest of the class in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. Now that the school is spending its pupil premium funding appropriately to support the pupils for whom it is intended, it is beginning to see a further improvement in their progress and in narrowing the gap between them and other pupils.
- There was some variation in the performance of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds in 2012. The school has put measures in place to support pupils who speak English as an additional

language as they move up the school. In lessons observed, pupils of minority ethnic heritage and those who speak English as an additional language made similar progress to their classmates.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching over time has required improvement. Although teaching across the school has begun to improve, it is not enabling all pupils to make good progress in Years 1 to 4.
- Where there are shortcomings in teaching, this is mainly because work is not matched well enough to the needs of different groups of pupils. There are times when more-able pupils are not challenged enough and when work is too difficult for those who are less able.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not always question pupils as well as they could to check whether they have the necessary understanding to succeed with particular tasks. Teachers' marking is often helpful and there are examples of them getting pupils to follow up written guidance, for example, by correcting mistakes or finding something out, but this is not always the case.
- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The teaching of communication and language, the sounds that letters make, reading and mathematics is matched precisely to children's learning needs. Teamwork amongst the staff is of high quality and children have exciting learning opportunities in the indoor and outdoor areas.
- Teaching is good in Years 5 and 6 and sometimes outstanding. In the best lessons, teachers encourage pupils' independence and are very skilled in asking questions that get them to think deeply. This was evident in an extended writing lesson in Year 6, where the teacher communicated high expectations and provided pupils with very clear guidance on how best to succeed with the task.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good in lessons. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning make a good contribution to their progress and disruption in lessons is rare. Pupils work together well and are keen to contribute their ideas to help move their learning on.
 - The school is a calm and orderly place and pupils behave well around the corridors, in the dining room and the playground. There are very few recorded incidents of inappropriate behaviour at playtimes and there have been no exclusions in the past year. The school promotes good relationships and pupils from different backgrounds get on well, with no sign of discrimination.
 - Pupils are polite to each other and to adults, and they are encouraged to think about the effect of their behaviour. Older pupils readily help younger ones. In classroom discussions and assemblies, they are mature and thoughtful for their age and show care and consideration for others. As they move up the school, pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility including organising and leading class reflection.
 - Parents say that their children enjoy coming to school and feel that they are safe there, and pupils agree. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe and say there is little bullying. The school generally deals with bullying well and immediately informs parents of any bullying or
-

behavioural incidents.

- Attendance is broadly average and it has improved recently because the new headteacher has taken effective action to reduce lateness and absence rates.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because, until recently, leaders and governors have been only partly successful in tackling the areas for development identified at the previous inspection. While there has been good improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in science, the quality of teaching is not yet good in all years and standards remain average at the end of Year 6.
 - Many teachers with responsibility for subjects have not had opportunities in the past to develop their leadership skills. Having just taken over the role, the special educational needs coordinators are at an early stage in developing their expertise.
 - The new headteacher has quickly raised the staff's expectations about what is possible and morale is high. She is supported well by other senior leaders, who welcome the opportunity to develop their roles and are working together as a close team with a shared commitment.
 - The headteacher has put in place much more rigorous systems for checking teachers' work and tracking pupils' progress. This is helping to identify pupils who need extra help so that all pupils are given equal opportunities to achieve. It also means that the school now has good capacity to improve.
 - The headteacher and other senior leaders are tackling weaknesses in teaching and closely supporting new and temporary teachers. The management of teachers' performance is much improved and teaching assistants are now included in this process. Parents are now more involved in the life of the school and those who expressed their views commented on how much the school has improved in recent months.
 - Subjects and topics are being reorganised to meet pupils' needs more fully and there is a broad range of clubs and educational visits. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their basic skills in a number of subjects in Years 5 and 6, but fewer chances to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in Years 1 to 4.
 - The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. A recent project, entitled 'Who am I?', involving pupils and their families, has been exemplary in exploring and celebrating pupils' personal and cultural backgrounds. On a regular basis, pupils have some exceptionally good opportunities to think deeply about their experiences and express their feelings and beliefs.
 - The local authority has provided valuable advice to the school, for example, in improving the Early Years Foundation Stage and is providing effective support to the headteacher in working to improve teaching and learning.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school requires improvement and that data shows some year groups have made less progress than others. They realised in the past that teaching needed to be
-

improved but tended to support rather than challenge senior leaders. Nevertheless, they are ambitious for the school and have been careful to appoint a headteacher with the necessary skills to bring about substantial change for the better. Governors are now better informed about the school's work, benefiting from training opportunities and, working closely with the new headteacher, are developing their role. They are increasing their understanding of how performance management is used to reward effective teachers and tackle underperformance. They keep tight control on the school's finances and are now making sure that pupil premium funding is spent appropriately so that it contributes to the progress of those for whom it is intended. They make sure that statutory requirements are met including those for safeguarding pupils.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	117492
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	401668

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	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthony McGolgan
Headteacher	Yvonne Devereux
Date of previous school inspection	20 October 2009
Telephone number	01992 635060
Fax number	01992 625215
Email address	admin@stpauls373.herts.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

