

Saint Paul’s Catholic Primary School

Park Lane, Cheshunt EN7 6LR

Inspection dates

24–25 January 2017

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|----------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Outstanding |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have effectively tackled the issues highlighted in the previous inspection. As a result, standards are rising.
- The determined and energetic senior leadership have brought about effective change since the previous inspection. They have the capacity to continue for further improvement.
- Effective teaching means that most pupils make brisk progress in their learning. This is especially true in English. The school has worked hard to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistent in all classrooms.
- Governors are highly effective in holding the school to account. They have an in-depth understanding of the school’s priorities and follow these up thoroughly to ensure improvement.
- Staff are extremely vigilant in ensuring that pupils know how to keep themselves safe in and out of school.
- Parents are very supportive and feel involved in the life of the school. They say that staff are friendly and very approachable.
- Pupils’ behaviour in classrooms and around the school is outstanding. They are extremely polite and welcoming and they are highly positive about their learning.
- Pupils develop their personal skills extremely well. The school provides a wide range of opportunities and activities for pupils to participate in at lunchtime and after school. Sporting activities, musical events and visits make a strong impact on pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Disadvantaged pupils are catching up in their learning. They are closing the differences with the rest of the school and are making strong progress in comparison to other pupils nationally.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception class make rapid progress with their learning. When the children leave the Reception class the number achieving a good level of development is above the national percentage, which prepares them well for Year 1.
- In foundation subjects, such as history and geography, middle leaders need to develop work that deepens all pupils’ learning as the most able pupils are not achieving the high standards across the wider curriculum.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement further by:
 - accelerating progress for the most able and the most able disadvantaged pupils in lower key stage 2.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - developing the role of middle leaders to ensure that pupils are given frequent opportunities to use and apply their skills in the foundation subjects, such as history and geography, and across the curriculum.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning further by:
 - ensuring that teaching consistently challenges all pupils to achieve the best they can.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the previous inspection, school leaders have made significant improvements. They have raised the quality of teaching and learning at the school so that pupils are achieving well.
- More pupils are now achieving the standards of which they are capable and the school is good.
- Leaders effectively check teaching by observing in lessons, looking at pupils' work and monitoring teachers' planning. This ensures that the quality of teaching improves because leaders are able to identify areas to develop quickly and, subsequently, can intervene appropriately to help teachers improve their practice. As a result, pupils are making better progress.
- The headteacher's determination to give pupils a good education has produced a culture of high expectations since the previous inspection. With the good support of the senior leaders and governors, the focus on improving outcomes in English and mathematics has been at the forefront of the school's improvement.
- Leaders use an array of information to hold staff to account for the achievement of pupils. This information also supports leaders to ensure that staff share their good practice and plan for learning together. Consequently, most teaching is good across the curriculum.
- Teachers are effectively held to account for the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make in their classes. The leadership team regularly monitor teaching with checks on pupils' work. They mentor and coach staff effectively to develop their skills and improve their teaching practice. The progress and outcomes for pupils are closely linked to the performance management procedures for teachers. Together, these strategies have helped to improve the quality of teaching across the school in the last two years.
- The school has had regular input from the local authority since its previous inspection. This has resulted in school leaders receiving suitable and effective support. The school has worked effectively with the local authority to develop systems to monitor and challenge the progress and challenge in subjects such as mathematics and English by all staff. This support has moved the standards up and the school is now being used as an example of good practice to aid the development of other schools in the area.
- Pupils benefit from a range of extra-curricular provision that contributes to their learning experience, such as choir, football and netball.
- Leaders successfully use the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils to support them through additional learning programmes, such as one-to-one support, additional reading support and direct intervention groups. The impact of these programmes has been to allow them to access the curriculum and to close the gap between these groups and their peers. Leaders provide opportunities for these pupils to improve their emotional well-being and engagement in their learning and to embed the progress which was made last year. As a result, the progress made by disadvantaged pupils has improved and is now in line with pupils nationally in all the core subjects, such as

English, mathematics and reading.

- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium is spent very well. Additionally, pupils have benefited from access to a wide variety of after-school clubs, competitive events and special activities. As a result, more pupils are participating in a wider range of sports.
- The special educational needs coordinator works closely with teachers to ensure that resources, activities and the learning environment are supporting pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in making at least expected progress. Home-school links are strong, and the school provides workshops for parents to help their child at home, enabling pupils to have support at home.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is outstanding. Leaders have created a strong culture of inclusion which ensures that pupils learn to value individuality and to consider the needs of others. Pupils feel that their views are important and learn that they can have real influence on decisions about how the school can improve. This helps them understand modern British values. The school has linked this work with the government's 'Prevent' duty initiative to raise awareness of radicalisation in schools.
- The development of the subjects such as geography, history, music and art are not as fully embedded within the school. The leadership role in these areas is not as strong as seen in English and mathematics.
- Parents are very enthusiastic about the school. The parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and those spoken to during the inspection were overwhelmingly positive about the progress school leaders have made since the previous inspection. One parent summed up the view by stating that 'this school has changed for the better in the last few years due to the dedication and hard work of the leaders. It is a different school.'

Governance of the school

- Governance is a strength of the school and has improved considerably since the previous inspection. The governing body has reviewed many of its practices and is now working effectively and efficiently.
- The governing body is well led and managed. Governors are passionate about the school and have ensured that they have the skills and training to provide effective challenge and support. Governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively, including those related to safeguarding.
- Governors monitor that the extra funding the school receives, such as pupil premium funding and the additional funding for physical education and sport, is used effectively. They know that pupils' outcomes in physical education are good and that the progress made by disadvantaged pupils is accelerating.
- Leaders ensure that governors receive appropriate updates about the quality of teaching.
- Governors regularly visit the school to check the accuracy of the information they receive from the headteacher. Notes from their visits show that governors carefully check the progress school leaders are making in raising pupils' achievement. During

their visits, governors talk to pupils and visit classes to see how well pupils enjoy their learning and check on the progress they are making.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Senior leaders maintain a robust overview of safety procedures and are vigilant in ensuring that policies and procedures work as effectively as possible. The school has good links with outside agencies that allow the school to ensure that any concerns about pupils' safety are followed through diligently.
- Records of checks on the suitability of staff to work with pupils meet all statutory requirements.
- Leaders ensure that staff are well trained and fully informed about the latest guidance for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being in areas such as child protection and e-safety. Staff are effective role models. Pupils follow their example in the way they talk, act and treat each other.
- At playtimes and lunchtimes there is a good level of supervision. The site is secure and well maintained.
- Vulnerable children are well supported and record-keeping is good.
- Pupils feel safe at St Paul's Catholic Primary School and their parents agree. Pupils are taught how to stay safe online and in the wider community.
- There is strong support to help families, and the school works closely with other agencies when required.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now typically good. Consequently, over time, most pupils are making good progress and attainment is rising.
- Teachers make good use of additional adults to support the progress of pupils and to develop their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers in most classes make sure that the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are suitably challenged. Where this is most evident, the children make good progress.
- Teachers use robust systems through which they are able to plan pupils' next steps of learning. This allows teachers to target those who are falling behind with their work or are finding things difficult. The staff have developed a 'learning pit' where the focus is on supporting those children who have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. The impact of this has been to rapidly target specific children and to clear up any misunderstandings that they may have. Teachers commented that this has been effective in helping children.
- In the Pupil Voice group, pupils said that they enjoy their learning when their teachers plan interesting lessons that challenge them. For example, pupils told inspectors how

they have enjoyed special days when mathematics is taught through other subjects and how they are learning to create their own computer games.

- Teachers question pupils well when they have to do far more than answer with a single word. This deepens their understanding and makes them think deeply to give answers that show a greater knowledge and understanding of the topic covered.
- Leaders have focused on mathematics as an area of improvement, as results last year were below national expectations. The carefully targeted and resourced work is showing improvements in standards at both key stage 1 and in Years 5 and 6. However, this is not as evident in lower key stage 2. Use of outside support, such as that given by the local authority to develop the knowledge and practice of staff in mathematics, has also had a positive impact on standards, and the school has set aspirational targets to achieve at the end of this year.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have good relationships with pupils. They also have good behaviour management strategies, which result in all pupils being fully engaged in their work and having positive attitudes to learning.
- Phonics teaching is taught with precision, resulting in a higher proportion of pupils by the end of Year 1 achieving the required standard than is found nationally
- The pupils stated that they felt the school helped them to learn but they felt they would like more opportunities in subjects such as art, music, geography and history.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils understand what constitutes healthy eating at lunchtimes. One pupil commented, 'We only have pizza on a Friday but it does have vegetables with it.' This shows that the children were aware of what is required for a healthy meal.
- There is a wide range of opportunities for the pupils to take on responsibility through being library monitors and supporting the younger children in and around school. The pupils relish the jobs they are given and undertake each of them with enthusiasm and commitment.
- Pupils spoken to during the inspection are unanimous in their views that they feel safe in school. Some pupils could recall lessons where they have learned various aspects of keeping safe, including when making use of the internet. Online safety has a high prominence in the school, with clear information displayed throughout. Pupils are aware of the various forms that bullying can take but say that bullying in the school is very rare. They are confident that if it did happen, the school would very quickly and effectively deal with it.
- Pupils are highly confident when speaking to visitors and greet them confidently. They say they are happy at school and enjoy their learning, and this is evident from how they behave.
- Adults contribute to the very warm and caring relationships that are prevalent throughout the school. Parents were clear that the school cared for the children and

that 'nothing was too much for them in supporting the children'. Pupils learn about other religions and cultures and are involved in leading assemblies. The chaplaincy team's input is valued and acted upon by the school.

- The displays in all common areas and in classrooms, and the way in which the pupils spoken to during the inspection were able to talk about, these showed how the pupils have a pride in their work. Pupils of different ages and backgrounds get on very well together. The school is a happy and harmonious environment.
- Throughout the inspection, the pupils and parents continually stated that the school is 'like a family' in the way it cares for its pupils and families.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- In class, all pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning. They listen exceptionally well and understand what they need to do to improve and make progress. Pupils concentrate very well when working, either on their own or in small groups or pairs. They talk sensibly and responsibly about their ideas and listen to each other maturely and respectfully.
- Pupils are very polite, respectful to visitors and behave impeccably. Inspection evidence from behaviour records and discussions with pupils confirm that this is typically the case over time.
- Pupils move very calmly around the school building, for example into assembly and between lessons, and settle promptly to their learning activities. Lunchtimes are calm and very well organised. Pupils enjoy socialising with each other. Friendships are evident at all free times, such as break and lunch, and this has a positive impact on how children help and support each other. The school fosters this outstanding behaviour as part of the development of the supportive family atmosphere seen throughout the inspection.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and have a desire to behave as well as they can. Pupil Voice pupils are certain that any poor behaviour will be dealt with swiftly, but could not remember the last time that they witnessed poor behaviour. Parents agree that their children are happy and that excellent behaviour is a major strength of the school.
- The great majority of pupils attend school regularly. Attendance has improved over the last year due to the relentless focus of the school and is now moving above national figures.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils are now making good progress in most subjects, especially given their low starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. This was confirmed by work viewed in pupils' books and from the school's own information.
- Improving attainment means that pupils are better prepared for the next stage of their education than in the past. Current pupils are now on track for higher standards than in previous years. Pupils in Year 6 are better prepared for the move to secondary

school.

- Reading and phonics are now well developed in school and are strengths. The outcomes achieved last year were above the national expectations and this progress was reflected in the work seen during the inspection.
- Children in the early years make good progress and by the time they leave Reception, the majority of children are well prepared for their transition into Year 1.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are making strong progress over time, especially from historically lower starting points. The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, in these classes are making good progress, but this is not yet the case consistently in lower key stage 2.
- The school met the floor standards last year and there has been an improving picture. The results do not give a true indication of the impact of the changes that have taken place since the last inspection as the school has moved to end the poorer attainment in previous years.
- The children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are achieving well due to the timely and focused interventions put in place by the school. Pupils make good progress from their different starting points to achieve at least average or often above average progress.
- A detailed examination of disadvantaged pupils' exercise books, including the most able disadvantaged, shows that their strong progress matches that of other pupils nationally. There is good evidence that the school has successfully used the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils to help them overcome any barriers to learning that they have faced.
- The school has worked hard to improve challenge for the pupils and Pupil Voice pupils said that lessons have improved and expectations are higher because 'Teachers explain better and we are now allowed to make mistakes.' Pupils knew that support and clarification were available and were clear how this support would make them achieve more.
- In the Year 6 tests in 2016, pupils' attainment was below average in mathematics while attainment in English and science was broadly in line with the national figures. However, from all data seen, book reviews and meetings with pupils and leaders at all levels, it is clear that the current pupils in Years 5 and 6 are working at higher levels than last year's cohort.
- Achievement in the key stage 1 tests has shown an improving and strong picture of attainment. Writing was the strongest subject. In reading, writing and mathematics the most able pupils did well, as did the most able disadvantaged pupils. Overall, the attainment of pupils was above the national average. Across key stage 1, pupils are continuing to build on the good progress that was made last year.

Early years provision

Good

- Teaching and learning in the Reception class is strong. The early years provision is stimulating and helps the children develop the skills they need to progress. This is especially true in mathematics, as pupils develop strong number skills and knowledge

to speed up their pace of learning in this area.

- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has also risen steadily. Any child who may be in danger of falling behind benefits from additional and well-targeted support from adults' help on a regular basis
- Children leave Reception with the skills and knowledge typical for their age and are ready for Year 1. Boys' development has, in recent years, lagged behind that of girls, but leaders have addressed the gender difference by developing activities to capture the boys' interests and imagination and have made use of a male staff member from the Nursery to promote a strong role model for the boys.
- Leadership and management of the early years are good. Leaders have high expectations of children's learning. Staff are well trained and successfully provide a stimulating learning environment. There is clear continuity of learning from the Nursery to the end of the Reception.
- Adults constantly promote good learning behaviours and develop real-life skills. Children are settled and there are positive relationships between adults and children. Children show a high level of engagement and sustained concentration. This prepares them well for learning in Year 1.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary because adults set high standards. At lunchtime, inspectors were impressed with how well children helped each other and chatted sensibly. These strong behaviours prepare children well for Year 1.
- The teaching of phonics is now well managed and embedded in daily lessons. As a result of this focused teaching, the achievement of disadvantaged children has also increased. This has resulted in the differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils diminishing.
- Parents consider the staff in the Reception class to be very approachable and there is good communication between home and school. The physical environment, including the outdoors, is well organised. This motivates children because it is lively, thought-provoking and stimulating. Children are well directed and supported by adults. Provision is particularly effective when pupils enjoy opportunities to learn independently, for example making their own dragons to tell the story of the Chinese New Year.
- The children get off to a flying start in the Nursery, where they make very good progress in all areas. The provision for Nursery children is safe and a major strength. Adults understand the needs of individual children well and plan highly effective and engaging opportunities for their early learning. The setting is steeped in vibrant examples of children's work, which demonstrates how quickly they settle in and make good progress.
- Children are safe and well cared for. Staff ensure that all welfare requirements are met.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 117492 |
| Local authority | Hertfordshire |
| Inspection number | 1002335 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 205 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Sharon Robson |
| Head teacher | Yvonne Devereux |
| Telephone number | 01992 635660 |
| Website | stpauls-herts.secure-dbprimary.com |
| Email address | admin@stpauls373@herts.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 11–13 February 2015 |

Information about this school

- The school does not meet the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website. It does not provide sufficient detail on the governors, nor does it have links to the Department for Education's performance tables.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what schools should publish.
- Saint Paul's Catholic Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who require special educational needs support is below the national average.
- The number of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below the national average.

- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is broadly in line with the national average.
- In 2016, the school met the government's floor standards, which are the minimum standards for achievement and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning of 23 lessons, three of which were jointly observed with leaders. Inspectors also made a number of short visits to lessons as part of learning walks throughout the school.
- Inspectors observed other aspects of the school day, including before- and after-school provision, small-group sessions, lesson changeovers, breaktimes, lunchtimes, after-school clubs and the start and the end of the school day.
- Various discussions were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, staff, pupils and children, parents, newly qualified teachers, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including: assessments and records of pupils' progress; the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance; external reports; minutes of governing body meetings; the school's self-evaluation information; and the school's improvement plans.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading, looked at pupils' books and scrutinised the school's information showing pupils' progress and attainment. Inspectors also scrutinised books belonging to specific groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils.
- The views of pupils and children were gathered by inspectors speaking to them in lessons, at breaktimes and in small-group meetings.
- The views of parents were gathered from 27 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors also spoke to parents at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Inspectors analysed responses to survey questionnaires from members of staff and 52 parents' questionnaires.

Inspection team

Henry Weir, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

John Crane

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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