

St Paul's CofE Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109987
Local Authority	Wokingham Borough Council
Inspection number	310164
Inspection dates	18–19 June 2008
Reporting inspector	David Mankelow

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	367
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steve Joy
Headteacher	Mrs Julieanne Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	24 May 2004
School address	Oxford Road Wokingham RG41 2YJ
Telephone number	01189 785219
Fax number	01189 795013

Age group	7–11
Inspection dates	18–19 June 2008
Inspection number	310164

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Paul's is a much larger than average Junior School. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those for whom English is an additional language are below average, as is the proportion eligible for free school meals. The number with learning difficulties, including speech and language difficulties, is below average but the number with a statement of special educational needs is above average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Paul's is a good school. Achievement is good and pupils reach standards that are well above average by the time they move on to their secondary schools. This is because the teaching is at least good and some is outstanding. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, particularly appreciating the smooth transition that pupils make when they join from the infant school. A parent typically commented, 'The whole process of transferring to St Paul's was excellent. My son started his first day excited and raring to go.'

A major strength of the school is the exemplary pastoral care. This high level of care results in pupils' excellent personal development, which, in turn, contributes to their good achievement. Pupils feel well supported by their teachers and their friends so they are not afraid to make mistakes. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and attendance is well above average. They make an outstanding contribution to the school and wider communities. They take on a wide variety of responsibilities around the school, for example, by helping in the library and dining hall and by training to be peer mediators. The mediators help pupils to resolve their playtime differences maturely, without involving staff. Behaviour is excellent in lessons and as pupils move around the school. Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare and always managed well if it does happen. Academic guidance is not as strong as pastoral care. The school sets challenging targets for pupils to achieve by the end of Year 6 but the setting of individual, short-term targets is new and less effective. As a result, pupils do not understand clearly enough how to move their work to the next level.

The good teaching is characterised by excellent relationships between pupils themselves and between teachers and pupils. This results in pupils having excellent attitudes towards their work. Most lessons move with a brisk pace and pupils make good progress because teachers frequently involve them directly in agreeing what the success criteria for the lesson should be. On occasions, work is not planned that is matched well enough, to pupils' prior learning and this slows progress for some pupils. The curriculum is outstanding and makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development, particularly their enjoyment of school. For example, during the inspection, Year 6 pupils were enjoying rehearsals for their production of 'Oliver,' which had been choreographed by one pupil and was being accompanied on the piano by another.

Leadership and management overall are good. Excellent leadership by the headteacher has ensured that all staff work together as a cohesive team, committed to implementing the changes that she has initiated. Recent improvements include the introduction of more regular assessments, and of procedures to track pupils' progress. Tracking information is now used to identify pupils who are not achieving as well as they should and teachers accept responsibility to ensure that support is put in place to overcome this. However, termly assessments are not always accurate and this reduces the effectiveness of the tracking system. The school's lack of complacency is summarised in the chair of governors' view, 'it would be even better if it was outstanding,' and the comment of a parent who said, 'School is never standing still, always striving to achieve more.' Consequently, the school is well placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teacher assessments are accurate and that teachers always plan work that is well matched to pupils' prior attainment.

- Implement improved procedures to set short-term targets in English and mathematics so that pupils know clearly what they need to do next in order to improve their performance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter the school with standards that are above average. They make good progress, resulting in standards that have been significantly above average in National tests for Year 6 pupils for a number of years, with a particular strength in science. This is because science is especially well taught with an emphasis on practical investigations. A high proportion of pupils in the current Year 6 are working at levels above those expected. Pupils with a variety of learning difficulties and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported by a team of specially trained learning support assistants. As a result, they make the same good progress as their classmates. School makes excellent use of external agencies to support pupils with statements of special educational needs so they too make good progress, academically and socially.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils have an excellent understanding of what is required to lead a healthy lifestyle. Many thoroughly enjoy taking part in the wide range of sporting clubs that take place before and after school and during lunchtime, and this makes a significant contribution to their health and well-being. Pupils develop an excellent sense of their own and others' safety. An example was seen during a Year 3 science lesson about forces when they were very careful not to cause injury as they propelled glue sticks along the floor using stretched elastic bands. Good achievement in English, mathematics and information and communication technology means that pupils are well prepared for their future lives.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding. They have a highly developed understanding of what is right and what is wrong and they develop into mature young people as they move through the school. Assemblies and class worship make an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Cultural development is good. Pupils have a good understanding of their own culture and world faiths but their understanding of Britain as a diverse society is less well developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have good subject knowledge so their explanations are clear. They mark pupils' work conscientiously and regularly. Pupils are frequently involved in assessing their own work and that of their peers. They do this incisively and sensitively which makes a significant contribution to their classmates' learning and to their own personal development. In most year groups, English and mathematics are taught in sets according to ability and this helps teachers to pitch work at the right level. However, not all teachers take sufficient account of pupils' prior learning when planning lessons, particularly for the most able pupils in each set. As a result, these pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Planning well-matched work is also hindered because some teacher assessments are not accurate. The headteacher has already identified this and further training from the local authority is planned for the autumn term.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Excellent opportunities are given for pupils to practise basic skills in subjects other than English and mathematics. For example, pupils particularly expressed their enthusiasm for what they had learnt during the Egyptian and Victorian theme days. There is an outstanding range of enrichment opportunities, including visits and visitors. The residential visit to Osington and visits to local museums are very popular and make a significant contribution to achievement in science, history and geography, and to pupils' personal development. There are excellent links with a local secondary school to support the teaching of French. As a result, many pupils pronounce French words accurately and confidently. Parents are kept well informed about curriculum issues through a range of newsletters and booklets, for example, 'This is how we do it - Supporting your child with mathematics homework'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Outstanding pastoral care enables all pupils to take a full part in the life of the school. Trained learning support assistants run programmes that help the minority of pupils who find relationships difficult to interact successfully with their peers. Lunchtime staff encourage participation in active games, which results in pupils' excellent behaviour. Parents really appreciate the care provided by all staff. One typically commented, 'The school creates an environment where children flourish and become happy and confident individuals.' Another summed up the feelings of most by saying, 'I wish I had gone to a school like St Paul's!' Procedures for setting pupils individual targets for improving their work have not been entirely successful in helping them to understand exactly what they need to do next in order to improve. The school is aware of this and a refined system is ready to be introduced for mathematics in September. A new system has not yet been agreed for setting targets in English.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has the confidence of the staff, the governors and the parents. One of the many positive comments that parents made on the inspection questionnaire was, 'We have found the headteacher to be welcoming and approachable and feel that we couldn't have anyone better looking after the welfare of our children.' Subject and phase leaders are now involved in monitoring the school's work and they contribute to the school's accurate knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. However, some of the actions they have taken as a result of their monitoring have not yet had time to raise achievement to the highest level. Governors also understand what the school does well and what needs to be improved because they receive accurate reports from the headteacher and other senior staff. They recognise that procedures to monitor the school's work for themselves are, as yet, under-developed.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

02 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Paul's CofE Junior School, Wokingham, RG41 2YJ

You may remember that I visited your school a little while ago with two other inspectors. Thank you very much for telling us all about your school and for making us feel so welcome. I am writing now to tell you what we found.

You and your parents believe that you have a good school and we agree with you. Most of you love coming to school because you know that you are exceptionally well looked after. Teaching is good so you make good progress and reach standards that are higher than most eleven-year-olds by the time you go to your secondary schools. You try your hardest in your work and you know that if you find things difficult the teachers and learning support assistants will help you. You are very good at assessing each other's work and using 'tickled pink' and 'green for growth' highlighters. Your behaviour is excellent and you take responsibility for lots of things around the school. The school council is especially helpful. We really appreciated being welcomed into your classrooms by the council representatives. Your school is well led and we know that your parents really like being able to talk to Mrs Taylor at the gate most mornings.

We have asked your teachers to do two things to make your school even better:

- make sure that they assess your work accurately and always plan further work that is not too easy or too hard
- set you individual targets so that you know what you need to learn next in English and mathematics.

You can help your teachers a lot by continuing to behave well and work hard.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Mankelow

Lead Inspector