

St Paul's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107319
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	324560
Inspection date	14 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Jane Hughes

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	206
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Bland
Headteacher	Mrs Catherine Haigh
Date of previous school inspection	12 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	St Paul's Avenue Buttershaw Bradford West Yorkshire BD6 1ST
Telephone number	01274 679 183
Fax number	01274 420 516

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement and whether pupils reach high enough standards, particularly the more able pupils; the strengths of leadership and management and how well these permeate the staff team, and strengths in pupils' personal development and well-being. Evidence was gathered from analysis of school data, the school's self-evaluation, teachers' records, classroom visits, pupils' work, parent questionnaires, discussions with pupils, staff, governors and senior leaders. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail.

Description of the school

The school draws pupils from diverse social and economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is smaller than average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and almost all speak English as their first language. Although fewer pupils than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, a larger than average proportion has a statement of special educational need. At the time of the inspection, a new deputy headteacher had been appointed but had not yet taken up post. A public right of way runs through the school grounds. The school runs a daily breakfast club from 08.00 to 08.50.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school, described by parents as, 'very caring and a school where every child is valued equally'. Pupils' good behaviour and strong personal development reflect their enjoyment of school as confirmed by their above average attendance. Satisfactory leadership and management maintain the school's focus on improvement, although several changes to the senior leadership team and governing body since the last inspection have resulted in frequent periods when the headteacher has shouldered too many responsibilities on her own. The lack of a deputy headteacher for extended periods during the last three years, coupled with a number of other staffing problems, have reduced the opportunities for the headteacher to plan and prioritise. Consequently, the school has not moved forward as quickly as might have been expected with a more stable staff team. Some embryonic initiatives are beginning to take effect but these have yet to show any measurable impact. For instance, curriculum teams are now in place but staff are not totally confident about how these will work or what their individual responsibilities will be. Nevertheless, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and, with a more stable staff and a full strength leadership team, demonstrates a sound capacity to improve further. Governors bring a useful variety of skills into school and conscientiously fulfil their roles. They show prudence in their financial planning and ensure that the school gives satisfactory value for money. They do not yet contribute fully to the school's self-evaluation which is overly optimistic in its analysis of current performance. A well organised administrative team ensures the daily smooth running of the school.

Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Inspection evidence shows that standards in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 2 have risen this year and, following a two year decline, are back in line with national averages. A smaller proportion of pupils reach higher levels in their writing. By the end of Year 6, standards remain consistently above average in English, where attainment is rising in reading but falling in writing. Standards are average in mathematics and science. The school is right to focus on the attainment and achievement of the more able pupils as evidence shows that the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels is declining in English, mathematics and science. Effective support from teaching assistants and specific study programmes for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensure they make similar rates of progress to other pupils. However, the school does not yet analyse closely enough the data it collects in order to identify exactly where and how improvements need to be made. For instance, the school recognises that, as a result of specific local circumstances, not all the pupils who join the school in Reception stay in the school to the end of Year 6. However, there is no analysis of the relative achievement of pupils who remain at St Paul's throughout their primary schooling compared with those who join at different times during Years 1 to 6.

Consistently satisfactory and increasingly better teaching ensures that pupils make sound progress. Even so, there is insufficient challenge in planned activities to stretch the more able pupils. Again, this reflects insufficient use of the data the school collects on pupils' performance. Current systems do not provide clear enough signposts to staff about what pupils know, understand and can do and how best to move their learning forwards. Positive elements are evident within the evolving curriculum. Links with a business college bring information and communication technology (ICT) benefits and pupils also enjoy weekly French lessons with a native French speaker, swimming lessons in Year 5, and visits from artists, sports and drama groups. Currently, there are few links between different curriculum subjects and older pupils no longer participate in residential visits.

Pupils are eager to talk about their school and have plenty of examples of what they like. They emphasise that 'teachers make lessons fun'. Appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place. For example, the school takes great care to ensure that there is adequate adult supervision whenever pupils learn or play outside. Pastoral support and care for pupils are high priorities for all adults, and pupils confirm that they feel secure in school. They are less certain about the levels they are striving for in their work. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but do not consistently record points for improvement. Effective links with other schools and colleges help pupils and parents to cope well when pupils join or leave St Paul's. They also provide occasional opportunities for pupils to study in a more specialised environment. There is an Enterprise Champion based in school and such expertise helps pupils to understand more about the world of work. Parents are generally supportive of the school and comment on the, 'good family ethos in the school'. They also praise the breakfast club and pupils confirm how much they enjoy this cheerful start to the day. Some parents volunteer to help in classrooms or with special projects such as a recent creative session with a local artist. Nevertheless, a minority express some concerns, particularly about how well the school communicates with parents and how the leadership takes account of and responds to their views.

Pupils have a well developed spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. The school plays an active role in the life of the parish and uses the local church for many celebrations and activities. Pupils demonstrate a developing understanding of diversity in Britain and across the world. Attractive classroom displays exhibit pupils' pastel, pencil and painted works of African art, for example. Pupils understand what it means to live healthy and safe lives. They enjoy circuit-training sessions and know not to approach strangers. Older pupils enjoy supporting younger children in Reception during wet weather activities and pupils of all ages contribute to the success of the school council. Pupils across the school are involved in fund-raising activities for the school and charitable organisations.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). They join the school from a wide range of early years' settings and with a variety of experiences. Adults introduce them carefully, through a structured programme, to the Reception class so that, by mid-October, children are settled and respond confidently to familiar routines. In general, children's skills on entry are similar to those expected for their age, although in 2007, children's attainment was lower than this. Some children make very good progress and enter Year 1 with skills well in advance of those expected, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Writing and linking sounds and letters, and elements of communication, language and literacy are weaker. Children are helped to learn and develop well in all areas of learning because the adults working with them have a clear understanding of the needs of children this age. Staff are skilled at allowing children enough time to think about what they are doing and how to explain a point to others. When looking at a Big Book together, children are confident enough to stand at the front, and use a pointer to pick out words in the title, reading aloud to the rest of the class as they go. Children follow the simple rules and clearly understand what is expected by the adults who work with them. They show increasing maturity as they move around the setting. For instance, as children came back into the cloakroom from outside, some wait patiently until the crowds subside. One observed, 'It's much better to wait here until it's clear in there, you know'. Adults promote children's welfare, safety and health well. There is an emphasis on healthy eating and on ways in which children can stay safe.

The EYFS is well led and managed. The indoor learning environment is well organised to reflect the different areas of learning. Children have daily opportunities to learn and play outside but there is no dedicated outdoor area for the EYFS due to the small playground and the public right of way running across it. Consequently, there is no continuous learning and play from indoors to outside. The school is striving to resolve these long-standing issues.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing.
- Challenge more able pupils to do as well as they can.
- Improve the use of data so that staff know what pupils must do next to reach higher standards and achieve well.
- Ensure that leaders at all levels understand their roles and responsibilities and so make a positive contribution to school improvement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of St Paul's CofE Primary School, Bradford, BD6 1ST

Thank you for your help when I inspected your school. I appreciated your friendly welcome and enjoyed listening to your views and talking to you over lunch. I was pleased to see so many of you enjoying the healthy menu. It was good to hear that you find school fun and enjoy your time at St Paul's. Well done for your above average attendance which helps to bring you greater success in your learning. You told me how you help in school and I saw that you carry out these jobs with pride. There is a happy atmosphere in school, you behave very well and your parents told me how they value the caring staff. I was pleased to see that children in Reception get off to a good start with their schooling.

I judge St Paul's to be a satisfactory school. Your teachers help you to make satisfactory progress overall. Even so, more of you should be reaching higher levels in your work and I have asked your school to concentrate hard on helping you to do that, particularly with your writing. Your teachers collect lots of information about your work and how well you understand what you study in lessons. I have asked them to use this information better so they provide just the right levels of challenge for each of you so you can achieve as well as possible. This may mean that you have to work harder but, don't worry, it will still be fun! The last thing I have highlighted is to make sure that the adults in charge of different aspects of the school understand exactly how they can make you and your school more successful.

You can help to make your school better by continuing to attend regularly and trying your best in lessons. Don't forget to keep up with the healthy eating!