

# Alverthorpe St Pauls Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior and Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108253
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	324733
<b>Inspection date</b>	6 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Fiona Gowers

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	253
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Rebecca Baran
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs C Chell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 October 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	St Paul's Drive Alverthorpe Wakefield West Yorkshire WF2 0BT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01924 303725

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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**Fax number**

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated in detail the following issues: the personal development and well-being of the pupils and the quality of the care, guidance and support they receive; the level of challenge provided by teaching and learning and the curriculum; the effectiveness of leadership and management at different levels through the school. Evidence was gathered from the school's own self-evaluation; published national assessment data and the school's own assessment records; policies and minutes; observation of the school at work; interviews with members of staff, pupils and governors; and analysis of parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

This larger than average primary school is situated in an area of mixed social and economic circumstances. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is broadly average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and very few are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school has received the Basic Skills Award, the Activemark and the Healthy Schools Award. The school has Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good and improving school. It has a number of outstanding features. Many parents confirm the school is highly respected in the community, typically commenting: 'I am proud to say my child attends St Pauls. My child thoroughly enjoys school and is eager to learn!' The outstanding leadership of the headteacher and school leadership team has been the key factor in significant improvements made since the previous inspection.

Excellent relationships throughout school help establish a very positive learning environment. Attendance levels are well above average and behaviour is exemplary. Pupils show how much they enjoy coming to school in their film: 'Welcome to St Pauls!' The quality of pastoral support for pupils has improved and is now outstanding. This helps pupils feel very safe and secure and develop excellent personal and social skills. Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and pupils are confident they would find someone to help with a problem. The 'lunchtime counsellor' plays a key role in helping pupils learn to deal with issues for themselves. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils have high levels of respect for others and develop the skills to take a great deal of initiative in the life of the school. For example, peer mediators are fully trained to help sort out problems that may arise at playtime and fully appreciate the need for confidentiality. As a group of older pupils explained: 'If there's a problem we hear both sides of the story, help them agree with each other and we don't gossip!' The opportunity to carry out such roles of responsibility, an emphasis on high quality teamwork and good progress made in learning basic skills prepare pupils well for the future.

Pupils achieve well throughout school. From generally below average starting points in Reception, pupils make good progress to reach broadly average standards when they start Key Stage 1. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Many pupils are starting to progress at a faster rate and more pupils are now reaching the higher levels in national tests at the end of Year 6. Standards have risen in writing, in particular, because of the success of whole-school initiatives to improve pupils' writing skills. Mathematics standards are above average, but the current school focus to improve 'mental mathematics' skills further illustrates its desire to be better still. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do as well as others in school because they receive well targeted support, following a very careful diagnosis of their individual needs. In 2008, school data indicate standards dipped at the end of Key Stage 1, even though most pupils continued to make good progress. This was largely due to the lower starting points of many of the pupils. However, the school's leadership has acted swiftly and provided extra support to accelerate their learning further. School data clearly show that pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are on track to reach their challenging targets.

Pupils achieve well through the school because they receive excellent guidance and support in their learning, good quality teaching, and the curriculum meets their needs effectively. Academic guidance is highly effective and, consequently, many pupils are now making faster progress. Marking, particularly in English, is exemplary and older pupils frequently work together to consider how to improve a piece of work. This enables pupils to know precisely how they can do even better. The quality of teaching and learning has improved. Most lessons are active, purposeful and move along at a brisk pace. Teachers use a wide variety of learning activities to stretch and challenge pupils. Effective questioning and paired discussions get pupils thinking, as they explore ideas together. Very occasionally, however, lessons do not have the same degree

of challenge and so the rate of progress slows. Teaching assistants make a very significant contribution to pupils' learning, effectively providing extra support and challenge for pupils who may need it. Very strong partnerships with a range of external agencies support the more vulnerable pupils in overcoming any barriers to learning.

The good quality curriculum helps pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science. Links between subjects are emerging, which add interest and enjoyment to learning activities and help pupils understand new ideas and concepts. For example, older pupils enjoyed sitting in an 'Anderson shelter', producing attractive artwork and having a go at 'Second World War' style cooking in a recent history topic. There are very good opportunities for pupils to learn about safe and healthy practices in their daily lives, and for pupils to develop a greater understanding and respect for other faiths and cultures. Information and communication technology (ICT) provision is enhanced by technician support and staff confidence and expertise has improved. Interactive whiteboards are used well in the classrooms to support teaching. However, opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to further improve their ICT skills or to use ICT to support learning in other subjects. Pupils enjoy a good range of additional activities, such as clubs, visits and a residential experience, which make a very significant contribution to pupils' personal development and add enjoyment and enrichment to pupils' learning.

The school's success stems from outstanding leadership and management. The headteacher is an inspirational leader and is very well supported by her deputy headteacher and leadership team. The governing body challenges the school very effectively in its drive to further school improvement and helps the school foster a very strong partnership with parents, the church and the local community. Central to the school's work is its rigorous self-evaluation. School improvement initiatives are successful because they are developed following searching analysis and the whole- staff team are fully engaged in their implementation. Staff readily take the lead on new initiatives because they are strongly encouraged to develop their own leadership skills. Many staff members pursue further training and qualifications, to improve their expertise and enhance the work of the school. Rigorous monitoring systems have improved the quality of teaching and learning and led to accelerated rates of progress. High quality care has resulted in outstanding levels of pupils' personal development and well-being. This is a school community with high expectations. School leadership has a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and knows precisely how it wants to improve still further. In light of such strengths and success, the school clearly shows it has outstanding capacity to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

When they join the EYFS many children's skills are generally below those expected for their age. Children settle in very quickly. They flourish in the warm environment. Highly effective use of praise helps children grow in confidence and develop very positive attitudes to learning. Children positively beam with pride, when they hear affirming comments, such as: 'I'm so proud of you. You're so kind and clever!' Children enjoy a good range of learning activities and they are encouraged to use their senses and explore things for themselves. Pupils make good progress and reach levels expected for their age, by the time they start Year 1. Progress is generally more rapid in personal and social development, the learning of letters and sounds and physical development. The EYFS leader leads a committed, hardworking staff team. Staff have worked hard to improve the quality of children's assessments to ensure learning activities meet the needs of all groups of learners. There are clear plans to further improve the quality of learning

activities outdoors. Parents appreciate all the EYFS has to offer, typically commenting: 'My child has settled in so well, absolutely loves school and learns something new every day!'

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to improve their ICT skills further and to use ICT to support learning in other subjects.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
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	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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	1
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

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**Annex B**

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

Inspection of Alverthorpe St Pauls Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior and Infant School,  
Wakefield, WF2 0BT

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. You should be very proud of the way you behave, because your behaviour is excellent. You do a great deal to help others. Your work as school counsellors, playground leaders and peer mediators shows how very thoughtful and helpful you are. You work very hard to make a real difference to your school and also raise a lot of money to help other people. You told us how happy you are at school and we really enjoyed seeing your film: 'Welcome to St Pauls!'

Your school is providing you with a good education. Your headteacher leads your school very well and makes sure you are happy and you learn well. You make good progress with your work and reach above average standards when you leave at the end of Year 6. This is because you receive good teaching and enjoy many exciting learning activities.

Adults in school look after you extremely well so you feel very safe and confident about asking them for help or talking to them about any worries. We have asked your teachers to help you learn how to do even more things on the computer and to use the computers more to help you learn in other subjects.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection. Keep working hard and enjoying your school!

We wish you well in the future.