

St Paul's C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108502
Local Authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	324783
Inspection dates	13–14 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Mrs Rosemary Rodger

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	264
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev. George Curry
Headteacher	Mrs Judith Sword
Date of previous school inspection	July 2006
School address	Victoria Street Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE4 7JU
Telephone number	0191 2733667
Fax number	0191 2732584

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an above average-sized primary school. Its social and economic circumstances are considerably less favourable than is typical. A high proportion of pupils are entitled to a free school meal. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Almost half of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups which include Pakistani, Bangladeshi and African pupils. The main languages spoken at home for these pupils are Urdu, Arabic and Bengali. A much smaller proportion of pupils are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS) comprises a full-time Nursery for three and four-year olds and a Reception class. The school runs a daily breakfast club.

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 which provides a haven of calm for pupils so that they flourish and learn to develop caring levels of respect for each other. The school strives well to remove barriers to learning. Parents are fulsome in their praise of the dedicated staff, excellent communication and the very effective leadership and management of the headteacher. The headteacher is extremely diligent and thorough and well supported by the deputy headteacher. Together they set high expectations and rigorously analyse assessment data. Parental comments such as, 'Each and everyone in school are doing their best to help [my child]' typifies the views of almost all parents.

Achievement is good, based on children's attainment being below what is typical for their age when they start the EYFS. Standards were below average in the most recent national tests in Key Stage 1, but they have showed a steady improvement in the past few years. The results of national tests since the previous inspection at the end of Key Stage 2 show an improvement in all subjects. In 2007 standards were average. Provisional results for 2008 in Year 6 showed that standards were average in science and below average in English and mathematics. Actions are being taken to successfully raise standards in writing but strategies are less effective in mathematics. This is due, in part, to some pupils lack of enjoyment of mathematics. Teaching assistants provide good support to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and, as a result, they make good progress.

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy school and understand the importance of keeping healthy and safe. Behaviour is good and pupils take their responsibilities on the school council and in the local community as junior wardens sensibly and well. The quality of teaching is good with strengths in the support provided by teaching assistants and the use of probing and challenging questioning. An extensive range of after school clubs and visits enriches the good curriculum. Pupils are well cared for. Assessment arrangements are thorough and effective use is made of data analysis to support pupils.

A determined and effective leadership team ensures that the school provides its pupils with a safe and secure environment in which to learn. All staff are dedicated to the school and hard working. The school provides good value for money and has a good capacity to improve that is confirmed by the improvements made since the last inspection.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children make sound progress in their learning given their low starting points. Progress in personal, social and emotional development is good. Children have positive relationships with each other and enjoy talking and learn to show care and concern for each other. They make satisfactory progress in developing their early literacy skills through storytelling and sharing books and learn to recognise sounds and letters in daily phonic sessions. However, the opportunities for children to make choices and work independently are too few in the Nursery and Reception classes and this holds back some aspects of the children's development. Teaching is

satisfactory. An effective team of support staff ensure that children learning English as an additional language are well supported and work well with other groups. A recently developed EYFS curriculum document is providing a good framework for planning and continuity between the two classes. Detailed observations are recorded to show individual children's rate of progress and to identify those in need of additional support. Opportunities for purposeful play and exploration outside are infrequent because of the limitations of the outdoors, especially for children in the Reception class. Considerable care is taken to ensure that children are kept safe and staff are appropriately qualified to meet the children's welfare needs. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Weaknesses in the provision for outdoor learning and liaison between the Nursery and Reception class are identified as areas to improve. Relationships with parents are good. A weekly reading programme is provided to help parents work with their children at home.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics throughout the school
- Improve the provision for outdoor learning in EYFS.
- Provide EYFS children with more opportunities to play and learn independently.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. In 2007, standards were broadly average at Year 6 which, given the low starting point to school, represents good achievement and good progress. Good progress in writing is noteworthy as a result of the recent efforts to tackle this throughout the school following a fall in standards in the 2008 national tests. Provisional results for 2008 were average in science and below average in English and mathematics. This was an unexpected fall after the improved results of the previous two years. School analysis shows that pupils did not achieve their targets in writing and mathematics. Successful actions to improve writing are having a good impact and support is in place to improve the teaching of mathematics, both of which are current school priorities. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress throughout school, due to the effective support and intervention programmes. Standards remain below average at the end of Year 2, but show a steady improvement in the past three years.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral social and cultural development are good. Relationships and attitudes to learning are positive. Behaviour is good. Pupils demonstrate respect for each another and towards adults in their day-to-day conduct around school. They say that they enjoy school and appreciate the regular visits and visitors to the school. Attendance is below average despite the good efforts made to tackle this through contacting parents by phone, sending letters and working with the education welfare officer. Pupils contribute well to the school community. They take their responsibilities as school council members very seriously. All pupils are developing good citizenship skills and demonstrate maturity as they are willing to take on responsibilities such as

receptionist cover at lunchtimes. The excellent junior warden scheme, working alongside community workers, helps them to understand about being safe on roads, in the house and on the beach. The recent environment award demonstrates their commitment to keeping their community free from litter and graffiti. This, along with opportunities offered through fund raising for those less fortunate than themselves, has enabled pupils to successfully gain an insight into responsibilities of adult life. Pupils take part in community activities such as carol singing and also have raised money for water for those in need in Africa. They are able to describe healthy lifestyles and what is harmful to themselves and others. They understand the importance of exercise and take part in at least two hours of physical activity each week. The high priority given to promoting basic personal and academic skills prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils and teachers forge strong relationships based on clear expectations and enjoyment in lessons. Behaviour is good as a result of considerable efforts by everyone to improve past incidents of unacceptable behaviour and the introduction of a well understood system of rewards and sanctions. The impact in literacy lessons of recent training to share with pupils what they are learning and to record the next steps are developing well. Well-resourced classes, especially the use of whiteboard technology and lap tops for all pupils enhances enjoyment of learning and achievement. Visual prompts to assist writing in some classes are excellent. High expectations, probing questions and the involvement of pupils in whole class discussions are features of good teaching, although occasionally such sessions are too long. Presentation of work is generally good, although in mathematics there is room for improvement in some classes. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning in and out of the classroom.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum meets statutory requirements. An extensive range of visits and visitors, for example, a theatre group and visits to local farms and museums, enrich pupils' learning effectively. The curriculum builds well on the diversity in the pupil body and makes effective use of the talents of parents from minority cultures to enhance learning about cultural traditions, for example Asian mums worked with pupils in school. Basic skills are developed well in information and communication technology and literacy, although this is less evident in mathematics. Links with schools in contrasting localities and involvement in a European card project helps pupils to meet others from different backgrounds and learn about their cultural traditions. Extended services such as the breakfast club ensure that pupils are calm and settled when they start school. This complements the after school provision, such as sporting clubs and holiday activities. Older pupils attend courses to equip them to work in the local community and to understand how to deal with the consequences of anti-social behaviour. A range of intervention programmes provide good support for pupils at risk of underachieving.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, support and guidance for all its pupils. Staff demonstrate a high level of commitment to pupils' care and welfare and parents are confident that their children are well cared for and supported. Pupils feel safe and know staff will listen to their concerns and help them resolve any problems. Assessment data is effectively analysed to show pupils' progress, set challenging targets and identify those pupils in need of additional support. The school provides focused intervention in, and has effective partnerships with, external agencies to ensure that appropriate support is given to pupils. As a result, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who are learning English as an additional language make good progress. Most pupils know their curriculum targets and are able to explain what they mean and what they need to do to achieve them. All the current requirements for safeguarding are in place. All teachers, teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors have recently undertaken child protection training. The school is currently reviewing its racist and behaviour incident recording procedures.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management, including governance, are good. A hardworking team of staff effectively support the headteacher. The school is a haven of calm, where pupils feel safe, welcome and loved. Governors are equally supportive and challenging. School self-evaluation is an accurate appraisal of the school's strengths and areas for development. Measured and well-planned actions to tackle underachievement are having a good impact on raising standards, especially in writing. The recently introduced assessment system to track progress term by term is very effective and is able to accurately pinpoint pupils in need of additional support and those in need of more challenge in their work. The headteacher completes thorough monitoring of mathematics teaching. As a result, weaknesses in mathematics are now a current priority. Action plans for English and mathematics give a clear direction to the school's improvement.

The school makes a good contribution to promoting community cohesion. It contributes to its community by working closely with parents. A parent support worker is an effective linchpin with the community, especially for vulnerable families. The pupils develop a good understanding of life beyond their own locality through links with schools in contrasting localities. Their willingness to raise funds for others further afield, for example in Africa, adds to their understanding of the lives of people from different backgrounds.

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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?	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?	2
The effectiveness of boarding provision	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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

Personal development and well-being

How good is 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
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

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.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	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?	2

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	2
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 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	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



14 January 2009

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Paul's C of E Primary School, Newcastle upon Tyne,
NE4 7JU**

Thank you for the welcome you gave me when I visited your school. I really enjoyed talking to some of you and finding out about the work you do. Please thank your parents for the comments they sent me about your school. You attend a good school and you work hard.

You are learning to become confident and are making good progress in your work, although some of you are finding your mathematics difficult. You have worked hard to improve your writing because your teachers give you good ideas and make it very clear how you can improve your work. Behaviour was good during my visit. I know you have worked hard to improve this. Well done. You said your lessons and after school clubs are exciting, especially when you use the laptops.

Your teachers all help you to improve your work and give good support to those of you who need more help. I have asked that the children in the Nursery and Reception classes are given more time to play outside and to play and learn alongside each other as well as in class groups.

You can help by telling your teachers if you do not understand the mathematical work you are asked to do and continue to try your best. I hope you continue to enjoy your time at St Paul's School and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Rodger
Lead inspector