

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Paul's CofE Primary School

Waterworks Road, Ryhope, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear SR2 0LW

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 April 2025

Outcome

St Paul's CofE Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy their learning, and they thrive at this inclusive and friendly school. It has high expectations for what they can achieve. The enthusiasm that pupils show in lessons reflects the broad and interesting curriculum. They enjoy exploring the local industrial history on their doorstep, or the geography of faraway places such as South America. Pupils learn the curriculum well, and this is reflected in their achievement in national assessments at the end of key stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well because their needs are identified accurately and supported effectively.

Pupils demonstrate high standards of behaviour and conduct. They reflect the values of the school, such as forgiveness, love and respect. Children in the early years learn clear routines that prepare them well for Year 1. Pupils of all ages take on a variety of leadership roles, such as sports leaders and digital leaders. These responsibilities enable them to support one another and make a positive contribution to the life of the school.

The school ensures that everyone has the opportunity to nurture their talents and interests. From cookery club to karate club, and instrumental lessons to sports activities, there is something for everyone to be involved in.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The teaching of early reading and mathematics is very effective. Children in the early years make a particularly strong start. Pupils learn to read with confidence and fluency. This allows pupils to study an increasingly wide range of texts and to apply what they

have learned in their writing. Some pupils need greater support with their reading. The school promptly identifies the extra support they need and they become fluent readers. Pupils build equally strong foundations in mathematics. They learn facts and methods accurately that they apply to increasingly complex mathematical problems.

Mostly, pupils develop their knowledge and skills well. Teachers check to ensure that pupils understand what they have learned. Pupils retain their knowledge and apply it in future learning. For example, in geography they learn information about the water cycle, that they later apply in the topic on rivers. In history pupils can adapt their understanding of concepts such as settlement and invasion to topics on the Romans and the Vikings. In Reception Year, children learn to grow their own food and then go on to cook with it. In a minority of subjects, the work given to pupils does not closely match what they need to learn.

Staff accurately identify pupils with SEND. They know these pupils extremely well. Work is carefully adapted so that all pupils learn the full curriculum. The school takes care to ensure that pupils with SEND are fully included in enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities.

There are many strengths in the programme for pupils' personal development. The school is highly effective in developing pupils' character and their social and moral perspectives. Pupils are encouraged to be 'agents of change.' Each year group have adopted a local charity, such as a care home and hospice. Pupils speak with pride and a sense of enjoyment at the money they have raised through the sponsored swim or the 'reindeer run.' From the early years, pupils are taught how to explain their emotions and to maintain their physical health. Older pupils have a well-developed understanding of important topics such as healthy relationships and online safety. Pupils understand the importance of tolerance and respect.

Pupils are hard-working, co-operative and kind to one another. They behave very well. Pupils play well together at social times. Pupils take every opportunity to be involved in enrichment opportunities. During the inspection, the school was full of beautifully made Easter bonnets. After the annual pantomime, the children in Reception Year make the most of the outdoor stage to create their own performances. The school is often filled with music and singing.

The governing body carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively. They are well-informed and have an accurate understanding of the work of the school. Governors work closely with leaders to ensure that standards are maintained. Leaders ensure that staff at all levels have the right training to carry out their roles successfully. Staff are extremely positive about working at the school. They believe that workload and well-being are given the highest priority.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a minority of subjects, the work given to pupils does not routinely focus on the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn. This means that pupils occasionally lack the detailed knowledge to make connections with prior learning. The school should refine the activity choices to match with the most important subject knowledge that pupils need to learn.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in November 2018.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	108836
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10346274
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	313
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Chadwick
Headteacher	Lisa Quinn-Briton
Website	www.stpaulsryhope.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	28 and 29 November 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school provides a breakfast club.
- The school uses two registered providers of alternative education.
- The school is a Church of England voluntary controlled primary school. The last Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) took place in February 2024.
- The school has a higher-than-average number of pupils with SEND.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation of the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.

- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, along with a range of other staff. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing board, the diocese and the school improvement partner from the local authority.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the free-text responses.
- Discussions were held with pupils and staff to learn their views about the school.
- The inspector considered a range of documents. These included safeguarding records, the school improvement plan and records for pupils with SEND.

Inspection team

Carl Sugden, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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