

Inspection of St Paul's Church of England Primary School

Penrose Street, Walworth, London SE17 3DT

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 July 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is summed up well by a parent when they said, 'Staff make every effort so that my child can learn and develop little by little on her own.' Staff care about helping their pupils; they know them well and adapt their teaching to meet their needs effectively.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils. This can be seen, for example, in pupils' good behaviour and high attendance. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They get on well with each other. Leaders' focus on helping pupils to become resilient and confident can be seen in all sorts of ways. Pupils, including those in the early years, readily came up to inspectors to introduce themselves and to say hello, for example.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on reading. In the words of a pupil: 'They are obsessed with it.' Leaders make sure that what is taught and practised in Nursery prepares children well for early reading in later years, for example through repetition of songs and rhymes. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported in becoming fluent readers.

Staff all work together to keep pupils safe and well. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe at school and that adults would help them if they ever needed it.

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

Leaders are ambitious for what they want pupils to achieve. This ambition includes ensuring that pupils develop a secure knowledge of mathematics. For example, strong staff expertise helps children in the early years to gain a deep understanding of the numbers up to 10. By the end of Year 4, pupils are very confident in their knowledge of the times tables.

Leaders keep the curriculum under review and have prioritised certain subjects since the return from the pandemic lockdowns. They are now making improvements to the modern foreign languages and music curriculums. In most subjects, leaders have thought about what pupils should know and remember. Teachers use their subject knowledge well in presenting and explaining new concepts to pupils. Pupils develop a strong body of knowledge and skills in most subjects.

In a small number of subjects or areas of learning in the early years, the key knowledge that leaders want pupils to learn is not as precisely identified and/or as well sequenced as it could be. When this happens, adults do not put enough emphasis on teaching and then checking pupils' understanding of the most important subject content and vocabulary. As a result, some knowledge is not sticking in pupils' long-term memory.

Staff have ensured that the library is an important part of the school. Pupils of all ages use it regularly, including at lunchtimes, and they develop an enjoyment of

reading for pleasure. Leaders make sure that weaker readers get all the support that they need to keep up with their peers.

Leaders have ensured that the early years is an exciting place to learn. The outdoors environment supports pupils with their physical development. Children learn how to balance and coordinate their movements as they safely negotiate their way over obstacles that have been set up for them.

Pupils with SEND have their needs identified quickly and accurately. They also benefit from receiving any individualised support that they might need, for example in relation to their speech and language. Pupils have access to a sensory room that is used to help meet pupils' individual learning needs.

Leaders prioritise pupils' well-being and safety. Pupils are taught how to look after their physical and mental health. This includes through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum, physical education (PE) and workshops from guest speakers. Pupils are also taught about the importance of respect and tolerance, for example for other pupils who have different faiths and beliefs. Staff organise different visits for pupils, such as the Year 6 residential and the theatre trip for children in the early years. However, opportunities for pupils to nurture their own talents and interests, such as through the school's range of after-school clubs, is too limited. Leaders acknowledge that the current offer could be broadened to include more non-sporting related activities.

The trust board and local governing body work well together. The trust gives lots of support to the school, for example through subject networks and their checking on the quality of education. Trustees and governors know the school well, giving the right balance of challenge and support to school leaders.

There is a real sense of teamwork at St Paul's. Staff feel very well supported. This includes with their work-life balance and in managing behaviour. Everyone is clear on the expectations for behaviour. Pupils behave well. They treat each other and staff with respect. Pupils also enjoy becoming prefects and helping to support other pupils at lunchtimes. Children in the early years follow clear routines, learning how to take turns and to manage their emotions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are quick to respond to any safeguarding concerns that are reported by staff. They keep detailed records, including their communication with external agencies. Leaders make sure that parents and carers are offered the early help that they might need to support their children.

In PSHE, pupils are taught a range of ways to stay safe, including when online. They are also taught about developing positive relationships, in relation to topics such as

consent and knowing when to speak out. Parents are confident that their children are happy and safe at school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects and areas of learning, the key knowledge and skills that leaders want pupils to learn are not as precisely identified and well sequenced as they should be. This makes it harder for adults working with pupils to know what content to explicitly teach and then check that pupils have understood. As a result, some important knowledge is not sticking in pupils' long-term memories. Leaders should review their curriculum thinking in these subjects, ensuring that what they want pupils to know and remember is identified, taught and assessed by staff.
- The school's overall offer to nurture pupils' different talents and interests is not as well developed as it should be. As a result, some pupils miss out on opportunities for their broader development. Leaders should review their offer and ensure that more pupils are able to nurture and stretch their individual talents and interests.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	146669
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	10267774
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jonathan Sedgwick
Principal	Ali Silke
Website	https://st-paulsprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy in February 2019. When its predecessor school, also called St Paul's Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate.
- The school is part of the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school is a Church of England primary school within the Diocese of Southwark.
- The school does not currently use any form of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with headteacher and other senior staff. Inspectors also met with leaders representing the local governing body, the diocesan multi-academy trust and the board of trustees. The lead inspector also met with the chief operating officer, and the trust’s education partner and school improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, art, mathematics and PE. During each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, and spoke to teachers and pupils about their learning. Inspectors also reviewed samples of pupils’ work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils’ work in a range of other subjects.
- Inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and behaviour. They reviewed a wide range of documentation, including pre-employment checks on staff, attendance and behaviour information. Inspectors also considered the views of parents, staff and pupils to help evaluate the school’s safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors also considered replies to Ofsted Parent View and the online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Sam Hainey, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Christian Hicks

His Majesty’s Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023