Inspection of St Paul's C of E Infant School

East Ring, The Cardinals, Tongham, Farnham, Surrey GU10 1EF

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 September 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	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

'Courage, compassion and community' are the values at the heart of this inclusive school. Everyone at the school wants the very best for pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils benefit greatly from the improved school curriculum. They are now achieving well.

The youngest children get off to a flying start. They learn routines quickly and how to manage their emotions effectively. Pupils are happy and feel safe and secure. Pastoral care is strong and ensures that pupils' physical and mental well-being is a priority. Pupils trust staff to help with any worries or disagreements. They understand the importance of treating everyone fairly.

Expectations for learning and behaviour are high and most pupils try their very best throughout the school day. Pupils rightly take pride in their achievements. They are confident in sharing their thoughts and points of view. They learn how to embrace and value everyone, as well as themselves.

The school encourages pupils to develop their interests and talents. It provides a wide range of visits, visitors and special events, which pupils, parents and carers appreciate. Parents recognise the many strengths of the school and comment on the positive changes made by the new leadership team.

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

All at the school are resolute and united in their ambition to provide a high-quality education for all pupils. The school has ensured that the curriculum is broad and ambitious. The important knowledge and skills that pupils should learn in each subject from the first day they start school are identified clearly. In mathematics and history, for example, the small steps that build over time are carefully sequenced and considered. The school ensures that what pupils learn is relevant and meaningful. However, in some subjects, the delivery of the planned curriculum is not as consistent as it could be. This means that there are gaps in pupils' knowledge that are not closed as quickly as they could be.

Pupils with SEND are fully included in all aspects of school life. Any additional needs a child might have are identified quickly. The school supports staff effectively so that they know and understand how best to help pupils with SEND. Tailored support makes sure that these pupils have access to the same learning as others and achieve as well as they can. Pupils with more complex needs have well-considered plans in place and receive appropriate support.

The early years learning environment is welcoming and engaging. The early years staff team promotes children's communication and language and their mathematical development well. The school continues to prioritise reading. The new phonics programme is well organised and structured. It begins as soon as children start in Reception Year. Children quickly learn new sounds. Each day, pupils enjoy listening

to the carefully selected books that enthusiastic staff read to them. Most pupils who find reading difficult receive effective help. However, some have limited opportunities to read books that match the sounds that they know. Leaders have plans in place to address this effectively.

Pupils learn how to regulate their emotions, take turns with equipment and settle into school routines from Reception Year onwards. Most pupils are respectful and polite. Pupils with complex social and emotional needs get the support needed to be successful. A small group of pupils sometimes struggle to focus in the classroom and, as a result, can miss out on key instructions and learning. The school understands the importance of good school attendance. It is working well with a small number of families to improve the attendance of pupils who miss too much time at school.

The school promotes pupils' personal development in many ways. Pupils know the importance of healthy eating and regular exercise. They understand the importance of positive relationships and how they are made. They take their responsibilities seriously, particularly in helping others and in the choices they make to improve areas of the school. Many pupils enjoy a range of clubs, including gymnastics and music. There is a focus on developing the skills that pupils need to keep themselves safe, including when online. Pupils enjoy learning songs and playing instruments, which they perform enthusiastically to others in the local community.

Leaders fulfil their responsibilities well. They provide appropriate support and challenge. Staff are very proud to work at this school. They appreciate the help they receive to improve professionally and maintain their well-being. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and are grateful for the individual care shown to their children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small group of pupils who are struggling to learn to read are not catching up as quickly as they could. This means that they are not as prepared as they could be for the next stage of learning. The school should continue to embed the phonics programme and provide further opportunities for these pupils to be successful.
- In a small number of subjects, the curriculum is not yet taught consistently well. As a result, some pupils are at risk of not learning and remembering important knowledge. The school should continue to improve the delivery of the planned curriculum so that pupils can achieve highly across all subjects.
- A small group of pupils do not always show positive attitudes to their learning. They disengage in lessons and are at risk of falling behind. The school should

help these pupils to learn the skills needed to access all the learning opportunities available.

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	125148
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10287945
Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Karen Lambert
Headteacher	Tom Hilyard
Website	www.stpaulstongham.com
Date of previous inspection	15 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Changes in the leadership of the school since the previous inspection include the appointment of the headteacher in April 2022 and the deputy headteacher in September 2023.
- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school hosts a six-place part-time SEND nurture provision that is maintained in partnership with the local authority. A small number of pupils from the school attend this provision three afternoons a week.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair of governors. He also held a meeting with a representative for both Surrey local authority and Guildford Diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and music. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also heard pupils read to a member of staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors took account of parents' responses to Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' written comments. An inspector also spoke to groups of parents on the afternoon of the first day of inspection.
- Inspectors gathered pupils' views throughout the day, including during lesson visits and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors met with a range of staff to gather their views about the school and took account of staff's responses to Ofsted's confidential staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Alan Derry, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Andy Platt	Ofsted Inspector

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