

Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School

Buckingham Road, London, N1 4DG

Inspection dates 22–23 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The headteacher has made sure that all staff share his remarkable sense of ambition and drive to improve the work of the school. All actions are linked to promoting the outstanding progress of all pupils. The headteacher is supported by experienced governors and a strong leadership team that includes teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Pupils make exceptional progress across all subjects from generally low starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Standards have risen rapidly in the last three years so that by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are significantly above average and continue to improve.
- Reading is a key strength of the school. The structured development of skills in phonics (the sounds letters make) and reading across the school has led to continued improvement in reading in the last three years.
- The quality of teaching in the school is outstanding. The teaching of writing has improved over the last three years because teachers have focused on providing frequent opportunities for pupils to write across different subjects. This was an area for improvement in the school's last inspection report which has now been fully addressed.
- The school has successfully closed gaps in achievement between pupils from different groups. A very small number of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium, who also have special educational needs, have made slower progress than others but this is now being addressed.
- The school provides pupils with the opportunity to experience and value periods of calm reflection, often through inspiring songs that are linked carefully to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is exceptionally well promoted. As a result, pupils' behaviour, attitudes and relationships with one another and adults are outstanding and are a key strength of the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, six of which were joint observations carried out with the headteacher and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader. Inspectors also carried out a series of short visits to other lessons across the school, observed an assembly and listened to children read.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils and members of the governing body, including the Chair and leader of the curriculum committee, and one representative from the local authority. Inspectors took account of the 23 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire as well as any parents' and carers' views which were communicated orally.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including nationally published data and the school's own data, the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, safeguarding policies and records and documents relating to performance management.

Inspection team

Justina Ilochi, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Terry Payne

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- About one quarter of pupils are known to be eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action and school action plus, or who have a statement of special educational needs, are above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, many of whom are of Black African, Black British and Caribbean heritages, is very high.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is very high.
- The school meets the government's current floor targets, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is no alternative provision.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the recent improvements to provision for the very few pupils who qualify for support through the pupil premium funding and also have special educational needs by ensuring that activities and classroom resources fully match their needs.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make outstanding progress from starting points that are usually very low. They make consistently rapid rates of progress so that by the end of Reception their skill levels are slightly above average.
- Standards have rapidly risen in the last three years in the school so that by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are significantly above average and continue to improve. Impressive numbers of pupils exceed the standards expected for their ages in all subjects. Pupils use their skills in English, communication and mathematics to enhance their learning across the curriculum so that they also enjoy and achieve very well in other subjects.
- Almost all groups of pupils make excellent progress relative to their individual starting points. Pupils with special educational needs, pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, especially Black African and Black Caribbean, and pupils who speak English as an additional language all achieve exceptionally well as a result of the outstanding quality of provision.
- In the past, pupils eligible for free school meals made slower progress compared to similar-aged pupils in the school and similar pupils nationally. Currently, these gaps are narrowing rapidly, especially in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, progress has been slower for a very small proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium who also have special educational needs, but the school has made a good start in tackling this issue.
- Reading is a strength of the school supported by a well-planned phonics programme. As a result, in the recent Key Stage 1 phonics screening test, pupils achieved above average results.
- Standards in English are above the national average. This is because of the school's focus on writing since the last inspection. There is a strong upward trend in achievement over the last three years and results for writing are now well above the national average. Outstanding subject leadership in literacy has driven the improvements and modelled highly effective practice.
- Standards in mathematics have improved over the last three years and are well above national averages. The school has provided intensive one-to-one tuition and this support has paid dividends.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Parents and carers, pupils and inspectors agree that outstanding achievement is the result of consistently good and often outstanding teaching.
- Teachers have high expectations of themselves and their pupils. They teach enthusiastically and inspiringly, supported by competent support staff, so that pupils learn exceptionally well. Planning based on accurate assessment has ensured that expectations remain high. Basic skills, including information and communication technology (ICT), are taught well across the curriculum.
- The teaching of reading is outstanding at Key Stage 1. Phonic knowledge is taught particularly well in Reception and Key Stage 1 so pupils make outstanding progress. Pupils develop a love of reading because of the many opportunities to read that are provided.
- The teaching of writing has improved over the last three years. The school has put in place effective strategies to raise achievement in writing in all subject areas, and pupils are encouraged to write at length and explicitly taught how to improve their use of grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Activities are well planned to match pupils' abilities. In a few lessons seen during the inspection, teachers had not identified activities that were precisely tailored for the small minority of pupils that had both special educational needs and were eligible for support through the pupil premium funding. As a result, progress for this small group, especially at Key Stage 1, although good overall, was slower than that of other pupils. The school is aware of this issue and is working

well to close the gap in achievement.

- Teachers have very good understanding of how to build series of lessons to deepen pupils' understanding and skills. The effective use of resources such as mini whiteboards has enabled teachers to continually check learning throughout the lesson and ensure exceptional progress for most pupils.
- Adults who support pupils in need of additional help, including pupils who have special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, are making a strong contribution to outstanding progress because their work is rigorously planned with teachers and they are well trained.
- Marking is regular and pupils are provided with guidance on how to improve the quality of their work. This had led to very high standards of work from pupils. Innovative ways of ensuring that pupils are clear about their next steps and correct their mistakes have led to rapid gains, especially in pupils' confidence in understanding how well they are doing and how to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. Pupils say they are happy and feel exceptionally safe at school. They act responsibly on the playground where they are well supervised. Their attitudes to learning are exceptional and play a significant part in their outstanding achievement.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They respond well to teachers' high expectations and seek opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning, and consequently they achieve exceptionally well.
- Pupils demonstrate outstanding social skills. They get on well together and respond positively to adults. They work constructively in groups. Pupils are respectful of each other, and help each other, so this contributes to their outstanding learning.
- Pupils enjoy school. Their attendance has been above average for the last three years.
- Procedures to manage behaviour are robust and followed consistently by staff; as a result, incidents of unacceptable behaviour, including bullying, are infrequent. Pupils say that when bullying does occur it is dealt with extremely swiftly by the school. Pupils have a clear understanding of the risks in life beyond school, including through use of the internet.
- There have been no permanent exclusions in the last three years and only one fixed-term exclusion.
- Pupils are taught to value outstanding behaviour and rewards. Assemblies are used effectively by the school to encourage reflection on moral and spiritual issues. The impact of this is shown in the pupils' respect for diversity and how well they treat one another.
- In lessons, pupils are taught the value of periods of calm reflection, often linked carefully to the extremely effective provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Consequently, pupils' behaviour, attitudes and relationships with one another and adults are outstanding and are a key strength of the school.
- The school gathers the views of all stakeholders, including parents and carers, staff, pupils and governors, in order to ensure standards of behaviour and safety remain high. All are very positive about the school's management of behaviour. This confirms the views gathered by inspectors.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The longstanding headteacher has justifiably earned the trust and respect of the school community by providing very strong leadership that has empowered staff to develop their talents. He has fostered an exceptionally strong team spirit through a unique approach to shared

leadership that ensures that different levels of staff are represented in the leadership team – both teaching and non-teaching. As a result, there is a strong belief that everyone shares the responsibility for ensuring the school's success.

- Central to the outstanding improvements of the last three years is the robustness of the school's view of its own strengths and weaknesses, the investment in the accurate tracking of pupils' achievement and the high-quality training and professional development for staff.
- Systems for managing the performance of staff are rigorous and skilfully linked to the monitoring of teaching quality and pupils' progress.
- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection as a result of accurate monitoring of classroom practice, routine sampling of pupils' work and regular progress checks. Staff have benefited from opportunities to continue to improve their practice through sharing best practice with each other.
- The school leadership team and governing body have made sure that pupils who qualify for support through the pupil premium funding are identified and supported well. The school has used the funding to provide additional adult support for these pupils. As a result, gaps in achievement between this group and others have narrowed further in 2012, especially in English.
- Teachers act on the points for improvement which come out of monitoring of their work. For example, where areas for improvement are identified, these are tackled within a short time-scale, supported through a planned individual training programme.
- The range of subjects and learning activities is broad and balanced with exciting opportunities for pupils to learn through music. For example, in an exciting Year 4 religious education lesson, the teacher was developing skills of writing poetry through 'rap' music.
- The school uses very effective strategies to ensure high levels of engagement with its parents and carers. For example, parents and carers are invited to see the work of their children, observe their lessons and talk to their teachers after assemblies. As a result, parents and carers have said that they understand the outstanding progress of pupils in the school.
- The local authority provides 'light touch' support through working collaboratively with a link adviser to moderate and confirm the school's views on its self-evaluation.
- All pupils are safe, and safeguarding procedures are rigorous and robust.

■ **The governance of the school:**

– Governance has improved since the last inspection. The governing body is exceptionally effective in its ability to challenge and support the school, especially through its active committees that meet frequently. The governing body receives regular evaluations of the school's performance and participates fully in setting school priorities and targets. Consequently, it knows what the school is doing well and where it could do better. Governors regularly evaluate and update school policies, especially the effectiveness of the use of additional funding through the pupil premium. They pay close attention to the school's evaluation of teaching and management of staff performance, and hold the school to account for any areas of underperformance. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and that equality of opportunity is promoted well. Members of the governing body have been well trained by the local authority to fulfil their duties. New members of the governing body are quickly inducted so that the high quality of interrogation of the school's work is sustained.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of care that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of care it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of care has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	100264
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	402823

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Number of pupils on the school roll	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Derek Vitali
Headteacher	Sean Flood
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 May 2008
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