

St Vincent's RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101143
Local Authority	Westminster
Inspection number	363648
Inspection dates	20–21 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Nasim Butt

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
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pat Moloney
Headteacher	Marina Coleman
Date of previous school inspection	6 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by eight teachers. Meetings were held with staff, governors and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised the school's development plan, tracking data, pupils' work, governing body minutes and school policies. They also analysed questionnaires completed by 61 parents and carers, 103 pupils and 23 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How well pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making progress in lessons and their current work.
- How well teachers and leaders use tracking and assessment systems to set personal targets for pupils and involve them in the process.
- The attainment in, and teaching and curriculum for, mathematics.
- How effectively middle leaders monitor and evaluate the quality of provision and outcomes in their curriculum area.

Information about the school

The school is average in size and serves a culturally and socially diverse inner London community. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly below average. Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups and just over half speak English as an additional language, although very few are at the early stages of learning the language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly below the national average and very few have a statement of special educational needs. The school has the Healthy Schools status and the BECTA Information and Communication Technology (ICT) mark 2009. There is also extended school provision throughout the week, which forms part of this inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

St Vincent's is an outstandingly effective school. Remarkable leadership has ensured that attainment by the end of Year 6 has risen rapidly in recent years from consistently above average to high. Given that children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills in line with those expected for their age, this is evidence of outstanding achievement. The school is an extremely caring, cohesive community in which pupils are known very well as individuals. Pupils say they feel very safe at school and are entirely confident that issues they raise will be dealt with efficiently by the adults who work with them. Very high expectations are set for each pupil in terms of progress, attainment and behaviour. Pupils respond very positively to these high aspirations and this is clearly demonstrated by the outstanding progress they make in the school. As one parent said, 'We are extremely happy with the educational project at St Vincent's. Children enjoy a nurturing and stimulating environment, where they thrive both emotionally and academically.' This is a view emphatically supported by many parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire.

Teachers are very skilled in breaking down the steps in learning so that pupils understand key concepts and ideas. Very good use is made of information about pupils' prior learning in planning lessons. This also takes into account pupils' attitudes to learning and their pastoral needs, resulting in very calm, supportive learning environments. Excellent examples of teachers' written feedback were seen by inspectors, especially in English. Nevertheless, the school recognises that this practice is not consistent enough. In addition, occasionally teachers do not share strongly enough with pupils what they need to do to make good progress in the lesson. A very exciting, highly tailored curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and contributes strongly to their enjoyment of learning. 'Enterprise Week' was the theme during the inspection and all areas of learning were linked to the objective of using twenty pounds to design and sell a product to the school community to make a profit. Pupils feel very well supported and confident to achieve because of the outstanding care, guidance and support they receive. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. It was an inspirational experience to observe Years 3 and 6 singing 'Marching to the Light of God' in Zulu and English with such remarkable passion, energy and unity.

The leadership of the headteacher is exceptional; she is very ably supported by a highly effective leadership team, who have embedded a culture of continuous improvement within the school community. The school is highly self-evaluative and any areas of underperformance are tackled rigorously. The commitment to continuous improvement is a driving force in this school and is highlighted by the fact that, since the last inspection, the quality of provision and pupils' achievement, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, has improved from good to outstanding. This shows that the school's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of teachers' marking of work so that it provides clear and specific guidance on how pupils can progress to the next level of attainment.
- Consistently share with pupils what they need to do to make good progress in the lesson.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils' progress in English is outstanding, and it is consistently good, with much that is outstanding, in mathematics. Through the problem-solving mathematics curriculum, teachers provide pupils with excellent opportunities and lively contexts in which to learn and practise their skills. For example, Year 6 pupils enjoyed applying their knowledge of statistics to solving real-life problems about albums and tracks produced by the 1960s pop group, 'The Beatles'. Pupils show excellent attitudes to learning and really enjoy their lessons. This was clearly evident in a Year 2 literacy lesson, where pupils designed and evaluated an exciting advert for their 'Enterprise Week' product. Scrutiny of pupils' work and displays shows that they apply their skills in information and communication technology very well across the curriculum, reflecting the school's information and communication technology status.

The school's detailed tracking systems, supported by scrutiny of pupils' current work in English and mathematics, show that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress over time. Excellent support and guidance in lessons ensures that these pupils are equally well engaged and enjoy learning. Excellent induction systems, coupled with effective interventions, ensure that the literacy skills of pupils who speak English as an additional language develop swiftly and are consolidated really well. As a result, this group of pupils makes outstanding progress in English and mathematics.

Pupils' consistently outstanding behaviour contributes strongly to their excellent learning. Pupils' strong enjoyment of school is reflected in their high attendance. They show a very detailed understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle in terms of diet and exercise, reflecting the school's Healthy School status. Participation in the impressive range of after-school sports clubs and activities provided through the school's extended status is high. Play leaders and trust buddies are important leadership roles that equip pupils with the skills they need to be successful in the future. Pupils in Year 4 and Year 6 were very proud to acquaint inspectors with their greenhouse project in partnership with Barclays Bank and the Department of Transport. Particularly impressive is the Wallace Collection project, giving Year 6 pupils an excellent opportunity to curate an exhibition locally and develop crucial life skills such as managing a budget and running a workshop. These, in addition to pupils' exemplary punctuality, make an excellent contribution to their future economic well-being.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is excellent because teachers understand how to structure pupils' learning in order for them to make progress one step at a time. This is particularly important for pupils who have lower attainment or who have gaps in their learning. This structuring of new learning also means pupils are fully engaged and make very good gains in their knowledge and understanding. In addition, teachers use assessment information very effectively to set and monitor individual pupil targets in literacy and numeracy. Teachers are adept at asking well-targeted questions that probe the understanding of the more able pupils. As a result, these pupils make excellent progress. Occasionally, however, pupils do not get enough feedback during the lesson on how they are doing and what to focus on to improve their work. Teaching assistants are adept at breaking down pupils' learning and probing their understanding so they are better prepared to think and learn more independently. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent.

The curriculum is highly imaginative and tailored to the needs of individual pupils. Creative use has been made of the very strong partnership with a local church high school to enhance provision for art, music, German and science. Themed weeks are extremely well structured and provide pupils with excellent opportunities to develop their personal, learning and thinking skills. Excellent provision for personal, social and health education encourages pupils to reflect deeply, as in the case of a pupil who quizzed a visiting police officer about the relative significance of intention and deed in relation to committing

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crime. Planning at all levels is meticulous and thorough. Very well targeted support enables all pupils, including some with very distinct additional needs, to make excellent personal and academic progress. Pupils supported by the learning mentor reflect deeply on the impact of that support. One pupil described her as 'someone you can trust and share your feelings with'. The school does extensive work with families, and new technologies are used very effectively to help parents and carers to support and guide their children.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders model a climate of very high expectations for all and have a deep commitment to building on and sustaining improvements. The school has developed effective practical plans based on individual pupils' progress to ensure that it achieves the most stretching of targets. The tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress data are outstanding, and the impact of this is seen in the rate of progress in writing in particular. The drive to improve teaching is at the centre of the work of school leaders, including the very competent group of middle leaders. An effective system of lesson observations, coupled with detailed feedback and support, has resulted in the improved quality of teaching in the school. In mathematics, where pupils in previous years did not make as much progress as they did in English, school leaders took effective and robust action to address areas for improvement. The impact of these interventions is demonstrated by the improving rates of progress in mathematics during the last two years. Teachers and the whole staff are adaptable to change and new creative ways of working. Comments such as, 'I am always grateful that the teamwork, friendship and team spirit are strong in this school; you are never left struggling in any area' demonstrate that staff morale is high.

Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the school. They effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of improvement plans and offer a good level of support and challenge to the school. The school adopts excellent practices across all areas of its work in safeguarding. The school integrates issues about safety and safeguarding into the curriculum highly effectively so that pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

Equality of opportunity is actively promoted across all areas of the school. Vulnerable pupils really enjoy the memorable experiences that the curriculum provides. When there is evidence of relative underperformance, such as for the very few White British pupils last year, effective support is implemented very swiftly so that any inequality is effectively addressed. The school understands its context extremely well and has carried out a very

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thorough audit of its work within the community and beyond. Pupils reading at the multi-faith service and singing at the Christmas lights switch-on make a deep impact on the Marylebone community. Strong links with a rural school in Cheshire and one in Germany deepen pupils' experience of other communities and makes a strong contribution to outstanding community cohesion.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to an excellent start because of carefully planned induction arrangements built on strong links with home. By the time they leave Reception, most children have reached standards well above those expected nationally across most areas of learning. Given that children start school with skills and experiences which are in line with those expected for their age, this demonstrates outstanding progress. Children are very happy and very secure because of the strong emphasis placed by all staff on their welfare and safety. Standards in numeracy dipped slightly in 2009; this was picked up swiftly by school leaders as a result of the rigorous monitoring and evaluation in place. As a result, this was reversed in 2010 so that this area of learning was well above average once again. Support for vulnerable children is excellent and a strong factor in helping break down barriers to learning. As a result, these children also make outstanding progress in their social and emotional development. The excellent progress children make is also the result of very carefully planned and stimulating activities on a daily basis. This was clearly evident during a joint Nursery and Reception free-flow session in the afternoon in which children really enjoyed a range of stimulating learning experiences that addressed different areas of learning. Teachers use assessment information very effectively to guide planning and check on every child's progress. The outdoor area is used creatively and allows lessons to flow from indoors to outdoors. Adults take every opportunity to extend learning through

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children's involvement and conversation. As a result, children are very well prepared for Year 1.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Around one third of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Of these, almost all are highly supportive of the school and very happy with their child's experience at the school and with what it provides for them. The very small number of parent and carer concerns related to their children making enough progress at school, and the school taking account of parental suggestions and concerns. These aspects are covered in the report. Inspectors consider that pupils' progress is now outstanding and the school is working very hard to engage parents and carers in many aspects of school life.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Vincent's RC Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 61 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 222 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	69	19	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	45	74	16	26	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	29	48	32	52	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	38	33	54	4	7	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	29	48	29	48	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	46	30	49	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	57	26	43	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	26	43	31	51	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	38	31	51	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	51	29	48	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	36	34	56	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	35	57	24	39	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	69	19	31	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



22 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Vincent's RC Primary School, London W1U 4DF

On behalf of the team, thank you for welcoming us to your school. Yours is an outstanding school which has gone from strength to strength in the last three years. By the end of Year 6, your achievement is outstanding and the school prepares you extremely well for the next stage of your education.

Here are some of the excellent things in your school.

- The care and support the school gives you are highly impressive. You and your parents and carers know that you are very well looked after.
- You behave very well, and show excitement and passion for learning; as a result, you are making outstanding progress, especially in English, and increasingly in mathematics. We were particularly impressed with the progress you are making in writing.
- Teaching is excellent in your school, and teachers work hard to ensure lessons are very lively and exciting.
- The school prepares you very well for the future by giving you opportunities through the excellent curriculum to develop important lifeskills. Your involvement in the greenhouse project and Wallace Collection project are especially impressive.
- Your headteacher is leading the school remarkably well and staff and governors are very good at helping her to make sure your school remains outstanding.

Here are the main things we have asked the school to improve:

- When marking your work, teachers should give you even clearer guidance on what you need to do to progress up to the next level.
- Share with you more consistently about what you need to do to make good progress in the lesson.

You can help by continuing to work very hard and achieving your challenging targets

Yours sincerely

Nasim Butt

Lead inspector

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