

St Eugene de Mazenod Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100047
Local Authority	Camden
Inspection number	354792
Inspection dates	7–8 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Michael Merchant

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Val Jennings
Headteacher	Juliette Jackson
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed seven teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They also talked to groups of parents and carers who were present at the start and finish of the school day. Inspectors observed the school's work, and examined its improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings, data on pupils' progress, records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching, and a range of school policies. They also analysed questionnaires received from 71 parents and carers and 97 pupils.

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

- Pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- How well teaching takes account of the needs of different groups of pupils and helps all pupils to improve their attainment and progress.
- The effectiveness of the curriculum in motivating and inspiring all pupils and providing challenge and interest for them.
- How well the school supports those pupils new to speaking English and those with particularly low levels of prior attainment.
- The effectiveness of middle leaders and the governing body in monitoring and evaluating achievement and the quality of teaching and learning, and in contributing to school improvement.

Information about the school

This school is similar in size to most other primary schools. The large majority of pupils are from a range of minority ethnic heritages and the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than is typically found. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is also high. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement, is above average. Their needs relate mainly to behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and dyslexia. The school is part of a federation with a local primary school and the headteacher is the executive headteacher of both schools.

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

This school provides an outstanding education for its pupils. It is an exceptional school which has made great gains in raising pupil attainment and accelerating progress by ensuring there is far more good and better teaching and improving the climate for learning since the previous inspection. One pupil reflected the views of many when saying, 'This is a great school. Everyone cares for each other here, it's like one big family.' Almost all parents and carers are supportive, and even those who have some criticisms recognise that their children thoroughly enjoy coming to school.

When children start in the Reception class, their skills are well below those expected for their age, and in some years they are exceptionally low. They get off to an excellent start and make outstanding progress because there is a very strong focus on developing children's social skills and their ability to communicate with each other. Pupils continue to make a high rate of progress between Years 1 and 6, and those who have been at the school for a long time, in particular, do very well. By the end of Year 6, attainment has risen considerably and is above average in English and mathematics. This represents outstanding achievement from their starting points and nearly all pupils meet or exceed their challenging targets. Pupils' personal development is excellent because they are encouraged to see their potential and are given the self-confidence to work hard and aim high. They have a high regard for both their classmates and for the adults who work with them and were keen to engage inspectors in conversation about their school. Their application and attitudes towards their learning are commendable. Pupils work cooperatively, having highly developed skills of listening, taking turns and giving and receiving positive criticism. A very positive atmosphere permeates the school, relationships are exceptionally strong and this, together with excellent care, guidance and support, results in happy learners. All adults work together extremely well to ensure that all pupils, whatever their difficulties or disabilities, are able to take full advantage of all that the school has to offer. Pupils' joy of school is palpable and is evident in the ever-improving attendance rate, which is above average.

Teaching is outstanding and makes a significant contribution to pupils' impressive rates of progress. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, give clear explanations, plan their lessons very well and expect much of their pupils. Teachers mark books and set targets for improvement thoughtfully and carefully so that most pupils are clear as to the next steps in their learning. In some lessons, learning falls short of being outstanding because pupils are given insufficient time to work independently and to talk about their findings. The exciting curriculum ensures that learning is very meaningful and great fun. It matches pupils' needs extremely well and does much to foster the development of pupils' learning skills.

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The driving force behind the school's success is undoubtedly the gifted and dedicated headteacher. She leads the school with unflagging enthusiasm and determination and is very well supported by her talented senior team. The governing body supports the school well and plays a key role in promoting effective safeguarding and strong links with parents and carers. It is increasingly becoming more influential in evaluating the work of the school and playing an active part in setting school priorities. There is a strong sense of teamwork and pride in what has already been achieved, coupled with a total absence of complacency. School self-evaluation is highly accurate. Most importantly, the school knows exactly what to do further to sustain its journey of excellence and this, together with the successful action leaders have taken to ensure improvement since the last inspection, means the capacity to improve further is outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure there is a higher proportion of outstanding teaching and learning in all year groups by:
 - giving pupils more responsibility for their own learning
 - encouraging them to be more active and inquisitive in class.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

The work seen by inspectors in lessons confirms the overall picture of outstanding and rapidly improving progress. Key factors in this success are :

- the fact that teachers have rightly focused on developing pupils' writing and comprehension skills in English
- the careful attention that has been given to developing pupils' problem-solving and investigation skills in mathematics
- the introduction of rigorous procedures for monitoring and evaluating the progress of each pupil towards challenging targets.

Consequently, the quality of learning in all lessons is now at least good, and in many it is outstanding. For instance, in an exceptional Year 2 numeracy lesson, all groups of pupils made rapid progress in developing their subtracting skills and really enjoyed the challenge of the task. In an excellent Year 6 lesson, pupils were learning at a blistering pace because of the teacher's exceptionally high expectations of what she wanted them to learn and the fun-filled challenging tasks she set for them.

The school works very effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who enter the school with particularly low levels of attainment and the high number who are new to learning English. Detailed plans to support these groups, coupled with thoughtful deployment of learning assistants and timely interventions, ensure that they make similar progress to that of their classmates.

Pupils have a very well-developed understanding of right and wrong, behave impeccably and have a deep appreciation and enjoyment of the wonders of life around them. There are some exemplary outcomes, as seen in samples of written work, that show the depth of pupils' feelings movingly expressed. This reflects well the school's strong Catholic ethos. Pupils relish responsibility and eagerly take advantage of the many opportunities to

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participate in many local and national events and are very well informed about other people's needs. They enthusiastically and knowledgeably explain the value of adopting healthy lifestyles and the need for exercise and have an excellent understanding for their age of how to be safe in the community. Pupils develop impressive social and interpersonal skills and relish working collaboratively. This, together with above average standards in the key skills in English and mathematics, means that they are well prepared for the next stages of their lives.

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	2
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	1
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
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?

One of the most striking features of this successful school is its exciting and well-planned curriculum. It is very well thought out so that all pupils can enjoy learning, achieve outstandingly well and gain many skills for their wider personal development. Subjects are woven together extremely successfully. Classrooms glisten with wonderful displays and computers enhance greatly the quality of learning. Stimulating displays engage pupils' interest and celebrate achievement. Care, guidance and support are exemplary in this school. The headteacher, staff and governors work inordinately hard to recognise and overcome barriers to learning that a pupil might have and these efforts are highly praised by parents and carers. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and those learning to speak English as an additional language is especially strong and helps them to achieve very well. Induction programmes are outstanding for those who arrive throughout the

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year and those starting in the Reception class. One new pupil said, 'I have been to quite a lot of schools and this one stands out the most...you can learn more here.'

The quality of teaching and engagement with pupils and their learning is impressive. Teaching is lively, tasks and concepts are clearly explained, and activities are carefully designed to challenge the pupils to learn at a swift pace. Adults ask perceptive questions and these help pupils to think and use more varied vocabulary in their answers. Effective use of 'talking partners', drama, role play and letter and sounds (phonics) activities helps pupils make rapid progress in their speaking and writing. The school has set up very thorough systems to check on pupils' progress. These are used very well to ensure that no pupil falls behind and to enable teachers to consistently set individual next steps for learning. Where teaching falls short of outstanding, learning and progress are held back because teachers sometimes talk too much and over-direct the tasks pupils undertake. This limits the time pupils are actively and independently learning and results in slower progress and less time for pupils to articulate what they have learnt.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
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?

The headteacher is widely acclaimed by staff, parents, carers and governors as having been hugely instrumental in improving the school. She leads the way in driving ambition and has established a shared sense of purpose to raise the aspirations of pupils and teachers alike. She is supported most effectively by a talented and energetic senior leadership team and by middle leaders and other staff who are committed to ongoing improvement. Consequently, teamwork is strong, staff morale is high and pupils' progress is accelerating. The senior team check the school's performance rigorously. They use their excellent coaching and mentoring skills to offer constructive advice and training and use their highly effective teachers very well to extend and share good practice. In this way, the quality of teaching and learning is rapidly improving. At the time of the inspection, there was no evidence of any discrimination and the school promotes equality for all pupils vigorously through this sophisticated monitoring and exemplary support. Outcomes for all groups of pupils, given their different starting points, are broadly similar, indicating that the school's commitment to equal opportunities is translated into practice.

The effectiveness of the governing body is good. It fulfils all legal requirements, and all safeguarding arrangements were found to be effective at the time of the inspection. Good practice in safeguarding and child protection is evident in all areas of the school's work. The governing body bring a wealth of relevant experience to their deliberations, and are

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very supportive of the school. They are increasingly able to hold the school to account for its work and have been influential in helping senior managers secure school improvement.

In this highly inclusive school, every child matters and individual needs are considered very specifically. The school works extremely well in partnership with external agencies and its partner school in the federation to secure extra support for those pupils who need it. There is a total commitment to the promotion of community cohesion. The principle of human rights is used as a baseline against which all curriculum planning and school developments are audited and policies are written. There is excellent involvement with the local community and a clear recognition that although the school is situated in a predominantly multi-ethnic and multi-faith community, every opportunity is taken to expand the pupils' understanding of the wider world through residential visits, visiting speakers, creative activities and the outstanding curriculum offered.

Given the outcomes for pupils, the school achieves outstanding value for money.

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	2
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

Excellent provision in the Reception class enables children to achieve very well and develop good independence. Children thoroughly enjoy coming to school and parents and carers are very appreciative of the excellent start that their children receive. Strong teamwork and rigorous assessment arrangements support children effectively, helping them to gain confidence and to learn school routines quickly. Highly effective teaching ensures that children make outstanding progress and by the time they leave Reception, most are working securely within their age-related goals. This is because a team of well-qualified adults support the children skilfully by asking focused questions to develop their understanding. There is a very good balance of activities that are led by adults and those from which children can choose, such as when children were seen to be enthusiastically

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participating in animated role play around the nativity area. Children are developing excellent social skills because they are making choices and fostering independence through working with others. The impeccable behaviour is a result of the high expectations and the welcoming, calm environment. The highly effective leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage means that leaders are fully aware of the strengths and areas they wish to develop. They have created a vibrant, stimulating learning situation both indoors and outdoors.

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

The school and its headteacher clearly enjoy the confidence and support of the vast majority of those parents and carers who returned the questionnaire. A number of individual comments praised the high quality care, support and guidance given to pupils, particularly to those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those new to learning English, and the big improvements seen in the school over recent years. The very few criticisms were followed up as inspection trails during the visit. For instance, a small minority of parents and carers raised concerns regarding the way the school helps them support their child's learning. Through discussions with school staff and groups of parents, inspectors found that the school gave good quality advice and support as to how parents and carers could help their children with their work. The views of the parents and carers interviewed informally at the beginning and end of the school day confirm the positive responses in the questionnaires.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Eugene de Mazenod Roman Catholic 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 71 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 199 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	75	18	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	53	75	18	25	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	40	56	30	42	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	52	33	46	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	41	58	30	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	54	29	41	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	55	31	44	1	1	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)	34	48	29	41	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	45	38	54	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	54	29	41	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	45	34	48	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	44	62	25	35	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	63	26	37	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.



9 December 2010

Dear Pupils

St Eugene de Mazenod Roman Catholic Primary School, London NW6 4LS

Thank you so much for the very warm welcome you gave the inspection team when we came to visit your school recently. We enjoyed every minute of our time with you. A special thank you to those pupils who came and talked to us about their work and told us about all the wonderful things you are involved in. Here are some of the really good things we found out about it.

- Your headteacher and all the staff work very hard to provide you with the best education possible. They take great care of you and want to see you all achieve the best that you possibly can.
- In Reception, you get off to an excellent start and you make outstanding progress as you pass through the school. By the time you leave at the end of Year 6, you reach standards in all your subjects that are above average. This is because your teachers teach you very well and you also work very hard.
- We were very impressed by the way subjects in your curriculum are linked together.
- The very best thing about your school (apart from the pupils and your excellent behaviour and attitudes to your learning) is that learning is fun and your teachers plan exciting and challenging activities for you.

Even though you go to an outstanding school, your excellent headteacher, governors and staff still want the school to get better. We have asked them to make sure that you are able to learn more things on your own.

We know you will continue to do your very best at St Eugene's and we wish you all every success in the future. Thank you once again for making our visit such an interesting and happy experience.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant

Lead inspector

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