

Clerkenwell Parochial Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100436
Local Authority	Islington
Inspection number	376398
Inspection dates	15–16 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Madeleine Gerard

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	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Sulkin
Headteacher	Matthew O'Brien
Date of previous school inspection	13 January 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 10 teachers, and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. They observed the school's work and looked at work in pupils' books, tracking data showing pupils' attainment and progress, the school's development plans, and policies and records for safeguarding pupils. They considered responses to questionnaires received from 106 parents and carers, 105 pupils in Years 3 to 6, and 16 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Are rates of learning and progress consistently rapid in all classes and for all groups of pupils?
- How accurately does the school monitor the quality of its work and ensure consistency of provision through the school?

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average primary school with Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children in one Reception class. The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic heritages, with a few from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. A small minority of pupils speak English as an additional language. None of these pupils is at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The large majority of these pupils have speech, language and communication needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. A greater-than-average number of pupils join and leave the school part way through their primary education. The school operates a breakfast club. There have been a number of staff changes over recent years. The school has achieved the Activemark and Healthy Schools status.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Clerkenwell Parochial Church of England Primary School provides a good quality of education. It is an inclusive school where all pupils are known well as individuals and are valued in the school's safe and caring environment. The headteacher and the staff work successfully together as a strong team to ensure that pupils have interesting work to do. This is reflected in pupils' positive attitudes to learning and motivation to do well. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start. Pupils make good progress through the rest of the school and reach average attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Teachers track how well pupils are making progress and identify those who need additional support. Extra help, tailored to pupils' specific needs, ensures all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who join the school part way through their education, make good progress. Teachers use assessment information well to match work in lessons to pupils' learning needs, particularly when planning group activities and independent work. However, tasks are not always as sharply tailored to the full range of pupils' abilities during whole-class teaching. Marking in pupils' books, a priority for improvement at the time of the previous inspection, consistently makes clear how they can improve their work. Teachers' written feedback regularly includes helpful additional tasks for pupils to do that aid their understanding of new learning. Group targets are less consistently effective in helping pupils to move swiftly up to the next level in their work. This is because they are not always specific enough about what the next steps are for individual pupils.

Monitoring and accurate self-evaluation enable the school's leaders and managers to identify appropriate priorities for improvement. Since the previous inspection, the school has developed the topic-themed curriculum to motivate pupils and engage their interest. The teaching of handwriting has been enhanced so that all pupils throughout the school take pride in presenting their work neatly using joined-up writing. The school has also successfully maintained pupils' good behaviour and the good overall effectiveness of its work. Changes in teaching staff have been well managed to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good. All these strengths show the school's good capacity for sustained improvement. Strategies have been introduced to promote regular attendance and good punctuality and to encourage parents and carers to send their child to school regularly. These include a weekly competition between classes and individual awards for the best attendance. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school has reduced.

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However, pupils' attendance remains only average overall.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 by:
 - increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching
 - ensuring that whole-class teaching is suitably challenging to meet the needs of all pupils
 - using individual targets to make clear to pupils what the next steps are in order to move up to the next level in their work.

- Improve attendance by raising parents' and carers' awareness of the importance of attending school regularly.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children join the school with skills and capabilities that are generally below those typically found for their age. Pupils' learning and progress through the school are good. They enjoy their learning and achieve well. They set to work quickly when teachers give them tasks to do, and they concentrate well. This was illustrated in a literacy lesson where older pupils were deepening their skills in using connectives to improve their spoken and written work. They showed their good social skills working sensibly together in pairs. Pupils were clear what they were expected to do because they listened attentively to the teacher's explanations. They enjoyed opportunities to develop an understanding of different types of linking words by using the interactive whiteboard to sort a list of connectives onto a grid. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, made good progress because the work was well matched to their needs. In a literacy lesson for younger pupils, they became very involved in using time words in their writing. Higher-attaining pupils were challenged well to build on their knowledge by writing a sequence of instructions explaining how to furnish a house. Those needing additional help with their learning used flash cards with key words to help them and also made good progress.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective in ensuring that they make good progress. Extra help in lessons ensures they keep up and learn well. Specialist support from therapists and well-trained additional adults is effective in helping pupils with speech, language and communication needs. Additional individual sessions outside the classroom, for example in reading, successfully boost pupils' literacy skills. Rates of learning and progress for pupils from minority ethnic heritages are good.

Pupils who join the school part way through their primary education settle well and make friends quickly because relationships are friendly and ensure they feel welcome. Activities including swimming, football and dance, together with sporting

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equipment for pupils to use at break time, effectively promote pupils’ positive attitudes to keeping fit and healthy. Together with success in securing Healthy Schools status and the Activemark, this reflects the school’s strengths in promoting healthy lifestyles. Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe from harm, including when using computers. Visitors, such as fire fighters, give clear advice about how to avoid security risks. The school council is proud of the suggestions it has made to improve the playground. It has recently surveyed the local streets to identify possible parking bays for parents and carers to use when travelling to school by car. Pupils organise fundraising events to support local and national charities. The gardening club tends the school roof garden and has shared its produce with the school community. The school choir sings for local elderly residents. Pupils have campaigned to keep pavements clean in the local area. Good gains in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enable them to show care and consideration for one another. Christian values are reflected in all aspects of the school’s work and links with the parish and local churches are strong. Pupils from diverse backgrounds get on well together in lessons and out at play.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers ensure that explanations of new learning are clear. They manage classes successfully and make use of a variety of resources to motivate and engage pupils’ interest. They use computers well to explain new concepts and ensure pupils have good opportunities to use information and communication technology in the classroom. Pupils make rapid gains in their learning when teachers plan opportunities

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

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for them to take an active part in lessons. For example, pupils in Year 6 were working closely together in groups to find arguments for and against a proposal in preparation for a whole-class debate. Sometimes, the pace of learning is not as consistently brisk during whole-class teaching when work is not always suitably challenging for all pupils. Pupils are keen to complete the additional challenges that teachers set them when they mark their work. Nevertheless, targets are less effective in identifying what each pupil should do to move quickly up to the next level.

Pupils enjoy the wide range of activities that the school organises. Planning ensures tasks reflect pupils’ interests and are relevant to their experiences. For example, older pupils in a science lesson investigated a variety of different materials to find the best sound insulator to reduce the noise levels in the headteacher’s office. Recently introduced topic themes have been carefully planned to motivate all groups of pupils to do well. However, these have not been in place long enough to show their full impact on improving pupils’ outcomes further. Good cross-curricular links are developing. Specialist teachers in physical education and music are used well to enhance the curriculum. A good variety of outings to local places of interest bring the curriculum to life. Extra-curricular clubs are popular including cooking, chess and debating clubs.

Links with a wide range of outside agencies promote pupils’ good learning and well-being and are used to provide additional help and guidance for pupils experiencing difficult circumstances. The school supports pupils effectively in preparing them to leave at the end of Year 6, for instance through discussions during circle time. Staff also ensure that important information is passed on to secondary schools when pupils move to the next stage in their education. The well-attended breakfast club provides a healthy and sociable start to the day. Here, pupils enjoy eating breakfast together, playing games including table football, and making friends with pupils from different classes. Systems to promote attendance are only satisfactorily effective in ensuring the whole school community is clear about the importance of attending school regularly. Although attendance is improving, it is only average.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, staff and members of the governing body tackle discrimination and promote equality well. All pupils have equal access to good provision and the chance

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to participate in activities in and out of school, regardless of their background or ability. As a result, rates of learning and progress are good for all groups of pupils. Leaders and managers embed ambition well and bring about sustained improvement. For example, they have ensured the quality of marking is consistently detailed in all classes and enhances the curriculum. Monitoring ensures that the school has an accurate picture of its performance. Some leaders and managers have very recently been appointed and are still developing their roles in securing further enhancements to provision that would aid the school’s ambition to continuously raise the quality of teaching and learning. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well. Safeguarding arrangements are good and the school site is secure and well maintained. Staff have a detailed awareness of safeguarding issues and risk assessments are thorough. Relationships are positive between different groups of pupils, and differences are respected because community cohesion is promoted well. Fundraising to support a school in Tanzania helps pupils to have a good knowledge of the lives of those who live in communities in other parts of the world. Through well-established links with a school in Essex, pupils have the opportunity to visit a contrasting community beyond their local area. They have a good knowledge of the school and local community, although pupils’ awareness of a wide range of faiths is more limited.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Opportunities to visit the school before they join, and visits made by staff to children in the pre-school settings they attend before beginning in the Reception class, help children to settle quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff work successfully to establish positive relationships and create an environment where children develop good personal and social skills, grow in confidence and are happy. One parent of a

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child in the Reception class typically commented, 'Our child looks forward to going to school every day'. Children work and play well together. They share resources readily. For example, in the doctors' surgery role-play area, children enjoyed dressing up and taking turns to use toy medical equipment. Staff plan a good balance of adult-led tasks and activities for children to choose for themselves. They rightly prioritise developing children's knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics), and their confidence in counting and doing basic calculations. Children benefit from daily sessions to practise these skills and develop their understanding well. For instance, in the outdoor spaces, children enjoyed pressing moulds into modelling dough to practise numbers higher than 10. Children make good progress in the Reception class. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed, and detailed records of observations are kept. Occasionally, the planning of activities for children to choose for themselves does not use assessment information rigorously to ensure that they are challenged to make even faster progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

More parents and carers responded to the questionnaire than is usually found nationally. A very large majority of the responses were positive. Most of those who responded are happy with their child's experience at the school and almost all confirm that their children enjoy their time there. Inspectors judged many aspects of the school's work to be good, and their findings endorse almost all the views expressed by parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Clerkenwell Parochial Church of England 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 106 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 201 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	79	75	25	24	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	79	75	26	25	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	68	64	36	34	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	68	64	31	29	3	3	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	71	67	30	28	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	63	59	35	33	6	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	56	53	43	41	5	5	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)	43	41	47	44	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	58	55	40	38	5	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	55	52	39	37	6	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	39	52	49	6	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	57	54	40	38	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	66	62	36	34	2	2	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



17 November 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Clerkenwell Parochial Church of England Primary School,
London EC1R 1UN**

Thank you very much for your friendly welcome and for helping the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and were pleased to learn that the Green Team are taking responsibility for saving energy by keeping doors shut, and switching off computers and lights when they are not in use. This letter is to tell you about the judgements that we reached.

Clerkenwell Parochial Church of England Primary is a good school. You told us you like coming to school. You behave well and are keen to learn. You have a good knowledge of how to keep yourselves safe from harm and take on responsibilities in the school readily. You have a good understanding of how to keep yourself fit and healthy. You enjoy all the interesting work that the teachers plan and particularly like the clubs and outings that the school organises. The youngest children get off to a good start in the Reception class. You make good progress in your learning to reach similar standards to most other pupils nationally by the end of Year 6. Those of you who need additional help are well supported and also make good progress.

We have asked the staff to make sure that you are set work that is the right level of difficulty for you during whole-class teaching sessions. All of you can help by telling your teachers if you find the work too easy or too difficult. We would like the staff to make sure that each of you knows clearly what you need to do in order to move up even faster to the next level in your work in English and mathematics. All of you can help by remembering your targets and regularly checking for yourselves that you are meeting them. We have also asked the school to work with your parents and carers to ensure that all of you come to school every day so that you do not miss valuable learning.

Finally, I would like to thank you again and wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Madeleine Gerard
Lead inspector

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