

Our Lady and St George's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	135193
Local authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	381830
Inspection dates	27–28 June 2012
Lead inspector	Gulshan Kayembe

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	457
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anita Feculak
Headteacher	Rosie McGlynn
Date of previous school inspection	Not applicable
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	27–28 June 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Gulshan Kayembe

Additional inspector

Avtar Sherri

Additional inspector

Kate Robertson

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 22 lessons taught by 14 teachers and made a few shorter visits to classrooms. They held meetings with groups of pupils and heard some reading. Inspectors also held discussions with members of staff and the governing body. They took account of the responses to the online Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at relevant documents, plans and records related to behaviour, safety and pupils' achievements. The team also analysed questionnaire responses from staff, pupils and 132 parents and carers.

Information about the school

Our Lady and St George's is much larger than the average-sized school, based on two sites about half a mile apart. It is also a new school which opened in September 2010 following the amalgamation of two former schools, an infant and a junior school. Most pupils are from a broad range of minority ethnic heritages, with about one fifth being White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high compared with the national average, although most are fluent speakers of English. The numbers of pupils leaving or joining the school part-way through their primary education is higher than usually found. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or receiving support at school action plus is above average. An average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement and progress. The Nursery runs part-time sessions, a morning and an afternoon session, daily. Most children transfer from the Nursery to one of two Reception classes in the year they turn five. The school has the Level 1 UNICEF Rights Respecting School award.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- Our Lady and St George's provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It is an improving school and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The school is not yet good because the quality of marking and feedback to pupils is not consistently good, more-able pupils in particular are not challenged enough, and not enough use is made of subjects across the curriculum to provide pupils with relevant opportunities for writing. Schools whose effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by Ofsted before their next section 5 inspection.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through Key Stages 1 and 2. In some year groups, they make good progress in reading. However, progress in writing is not as secure. Some groups, for example, pupils known to eligible for free school meals, are achieving well.
- Teaching is satisfactory over time. While work provided in lessons usually matches the needs of most pupils, it does not challenge and extend the more-able pupils enough. Teachers do not consistently provide clear guidance to pupils on their next steps in learning nor involve them enough in assessing their work. Classrooms are well managed and organised.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is typically good. The school provides strong care and support to pupils. This means pupils are, and feel, safe and secure at school and learn to care for one another.
- The school's leadership is satisfactory, and has some good features. The amalgamation of the two schools has been well managed and new systems and processes, including for performance management, are established. Although teaching is regularly checked, not enough attention is given to learning during lesson observations. The school's positive climate nurtures pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement in writing by ensuring that all classes have regular opportunities to practise and develop their writing, including extended writing,

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- in other subjects.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that they are consistently good by:
 - ensuring that all lessons provide sufficiently challenging work for more-able pupils
 - making sure that all lessons engage pupils actively so that they produce more work of their own and are not listening to overlong introductions
 - providing pupils with clear guidance on how to improve their work and their next steps in learning
 - involving pupils more regularly in assessing their own and one another's work.

 - Develop the leadership of teaching further by ensuring that leaders focus sufficiently on what pupils are doing and how well they are learning when observing lessons.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Attainment on entry into the Early Years Foundation Stage is low and children's skills in literacy are particularly low when they begin. They make good progress in Nursery and Reception so that by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, they meet the expected goals for learning. Children achieve particularly well in their personal and social development.

In 2011, the results of the school's first National Curriculum assessments and tests were broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1. Their attainment in English and mathematics was broadly average by the end of Key Stage 2, and pupils' progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 was satisfactory. Pupils currently in the school are making satisfactory progress and reaching broadly average levels of attainment by the end of both key stages. Attainment in reading is broadly in line with national averages at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2, although it was above average at the end of Year 6 in 2011.

Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' progress in reading and mathematics tends to be more secure than in writing, and in some year groups progress in reading is good. The school's adoption of a new scheme to teach letters and sounds (phonics) is having a positive impact in helping children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils in Key Stage 1 to read unfamiliar words. Progress in writing, while satisfactory overall, is not as steady as in reading and mathematics. Children in Reception are becoming proficient at using phonics to help them spell simple words, but this is not as well embedded in Key Stage 1. Teachers do not make enough use of other subjects as a platform for pupils to practise, and hence further develop, their writing skills and to write independently.

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In lessons, pupils work particularly well to discuss their work in pairs gaining useful ideas from one another. Less-able pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, generally make good progress because of:

- the usually good support provided by teaching assistants in lessons
- the effective additional tuition in small groups in English and mathematics
- the strong care and support which helps to build these pupils' confidence and assist their families so that they are better able to help their children.

In a Year 4 lesson, for example, a teaching assistant working with a group of pupils with learning difficulties explained the teacher's instructions in a way that made it easier to understand. She then checked back to make sure these pupils knew what they were expected to learn. Being clear about the task meant they got on with it and made good progress. More-able pupils, however, are not challenged enough to make the rapid progress they are capable of. When they are, they rise well to the occasion. For example, in an introductory Year 6 mathematics lesson on angles, more-able pupils in the group were given more challenging angles to think about and quickly worked the size of a three-quarter turn. Beginners in English, including those who join the school late, make good progress in developing their English language. More fluent speakers make similar progress to most other pupils. There is no significant difference in the achievement based on ethnicity or gender.

Most parents and carers feel that their children are making good progress. Inspection findings indicate that, while some groups make good progress, overall progress is not consistently good for all or most groups of pupils.

Quality of teaching

Teachers establish good working relationships with their pupils and ensure that class routines and conventions are well understood. Lesson plans identify clear learning objectives but do not always outline a clear set of criteria by which the teacher and pupils can assess learning. Teachers question pupils well and ask probing questions that help them to think about their work and key ideas. Their use of paired discussion helps pupils' understanding and enables them to rehearse ideas before sharing them with the whole class. Teaching assistants are well deployed and, in the best lessons, have well-modified resources or activities to use with pupils who have learning difficulties. They question pupils effectively to both check understanding and extend it.

Where teaching is good, pupils are actively engaged and given effective tasks to support their learning. In a good science lesson, doing experiments with light helped pupils' understanding about shadows. However, sometimes, teachers talk for too long or direct tasks too closely, resulting in learning being slower and pupils having less opportunity to develop their independence and initiative. Work in lessons meets most pupils' needs, especially lower and middle attainers. However, in many lessons, the work is too easy for the more able. Most parents and carers and pupils feel that teaching is good. Inspection findings indicate that teaching over time is not yet consistently good.

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Children are taught well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. An individualised phonics programme ensures that all ability groups make good progress in developing their early reading skills. A good range of outdoor and indoor activities ensures good coverage of the areas of learning, although there are not always enough opportunities for writing when children are working independently.

Reading is taught satisfactorily across the school and the teaching of phonics is improving with the implementation of the new programme. Pupils' social and moral development is promoted effectively in lessons through pair-talk for example. In one mathematics lesson, the teacher made a good link between angles and cubism and the work of artists such as Picasso.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are positive about their learning and about school. This is reflected in their above average attendance. Discussions with pupils indicate that they enjoy learning and want to do well at school. This is evident in their ability to concentrate and listen even when teachers do much of the talking. Pupils are also good at listening to and learning from one another through their discussions. Consequently, behaviour in lessons is good and there is little evidence of any disruption to learning as a result of poor behaviour. Most pupils and their parents and carers agree that behaviour is good. Pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural needs modify their behaviour well over time with support from school staff. The school promotes a strong inclusive ethos and this means that those new to the school settle in quickly and achieve as well as others.

Behaviour around the school is also good and school records confirm that this is typically the case. Bullying is not an issue and pupils are confident that, should it occur, it will be dealt with effectively. Pupils feel safe and parents and carers are confident that the school looks after them well. Behaviour around the school is safe and pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet or when out and about. School records show very few incidents of racist or other prejudiced-based behaviour and that these are dealt with decisively. Pupils themselves have a strong sense of social justice when it comes to issues such as racism and understand how wrong it is.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides good leadership and she is effectively supported by a well-structured senior team. The responsibilities of middle leaders have been clearly identified and their roles are being developed successfully. The headteacher and governors are ambitious for the school and have successfully taken it through the complexities of amalgamation to achieve a unified institution with common policies and procedures. They are aware that there is still work to be done to embed consistency of practice across the whole school. Lessons are regularly monitored and any issues picked up are fed back to teachers to support continuous improvement in

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their performance. Consequently, any inadequate teaching has been eradicated and teaching, for example in phonics, is improving, leading to improvements in pupils' achievements. These factors support the school's capacity for further improvement. However, lesson observations tend to focus too much on what the teacher is doing as opposed to how well pupils are learning, so reducing the sharpness of information gathered to feed into improvement plans. Monitoring and tracking of progress are satisfactory and improving as the new assessment system beds in. It has been used effectively to help target and secure improvements in writing in Key Stage 1. Equal opportunity is soundly promoted and discrimination is not tolerated. Consequently, no group is underachieving though there is more to do to ensure consistently good progress for all groups, especially the more-able pupils.

The governing body ensures that safeguarding requirements are met and policies and procedures are well implemented. The curriculum is promoted satisfactorily with work underway to develop a creative curriculum. High quality assemblies and the extensive range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Engagement and communication with parents and carers, led by the governing body, are good.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



29 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady and St George's Catholic Primary School, Waltham Forest E17 3EA

Thank you for giving us such a friendly welcome when we visited your school recently and for sharing your views with us. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing you in lessons. Your school is giving you a satisfactory education and you make satisfactory progress in your learning. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get a good start to their education.

You told us how much you enjoy school and we can see this in your high levels of attendance. We were impressed with how well you focus and concentrate in lessons. You are really serious about your learning. You behave well and we could see you get on well with one another, both in lessons when you are talking in pairs and out in the playground. You make a really good job of taking assemblies. Staff look after you well and you appreciate the help they give you. The way in which help is provided for pupils who find learning difficult is good and assists their learning.

Your headteacher and the governing body have done well to bring the infant and junior schools together to form your new school. They know, though, that there is more to do to make the school better. We have asked them to make the following improvements.

- To provide regular opportunities for you to practise writing in other subjects.
- To make teaching better by making sure that those who can learn faster are given work that is not too easy, all lessons get you actively involved and marking helps you to get a better idea of your next steps in learning.
- To ensure that when leaders are observing lessons, they pay as much attention to how well you are learning as they do to what teachers are telling you.

To help your school improve, we hope you will all continue to do your best work at all times and keep up your high level of attendance. We wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gulshan Kayembe
Lead inspector

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