

St Bede's Catholic Infant and Nursery School

Thornton Road, Clapham Park, London, SW12 0LF

Inspection dates 2–3 July 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Most pupils enter the school with skill levels well below those expected for their age. Children make rapid progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs and those who are eligible for free school meals make good progress and gain higher attainment than similar pupils nationally.
- Reading is very well promoted within the school and pupils develop a love of books and reading as a result.
- Teaching is consistently good and a growing proportion is outstanding. Teachers are aspirational for pupils and provide high levels of appropriate challenge which ensures all pupils learn well.
- The teaching of phonics (linking sounds with letters) has improved significantly and pupils are very confident in using these skills in their reading and writing.
- Behaviour is exemplary throughout the school. Pupils are polite, courteous and well behaved. They understand the concept of bullying and understand how to stay safe in school and in a variety of familiar contexts.
- The school works exceptionally well with a range of agencies and individual families to secure improvement in behaviour.
- Leaders at all levels are highly ambitious for the school and individuals. Checks made on teaching have been used very well to improve the quality of teaching and raise standards further; as a result the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved strongly since the last inspection.
- Highly effective leadership and management at all levels, including the governing body, have driven considerable important improvements in the school's work since the last inspection.
- Subject leaders have been well trained and are securing improvements in their areas of responsibility.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Too few pupils currently reach the higher level of attainment, Level 3, by the end of Key Stage 1.
- There is not sufficient teaching that is consistently outstanding to ensure all pupils make rapid progress in Key Stage 1.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons or parts of lessons, of which four were joint observations with one of the co-headteachers or the assistant headteacher.
- Inspectors observed groups of pupils working with teaching assistants. Inspectors also listened to Year 2 pupils read, and other year groups in lessons.
- They looked at work in pupils' books jointly with the assistant headteacher.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils from Year 2 who were from a range of different backgrounds. Inspectors held informal discussions with other pupils.
- Inspectors held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, one other governor, senior leaders, subject leaders and a representative from the local authority.
- A range of documentation regarding the school's work was reviewed, including the management of staff performance, records of behaviour and safety, pupil progress and attainment information, the school's improvement plan, the school's evaluation of its performance, attendance information and minutes from governing body meetings.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and considered a number of documents, including the school's own evaluation of its performance, its improvement plan and minutes from governing body meetings.
- The views of 23 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account. In addition, the team received and analysed 16 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

David Storrie, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Victoria Turner

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average sized infant school.
- A nursery is part of the school with a mixture of full-time and part-time children in attendance. There are two classes in all other year groups in the school.
- Since the last inspection there have been a number of staff changes, including the appointment of co-headteachers and an assistant headteacher.
- The proportion of pupils who are from ethnic minority backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- Those pupils receiving support from the pupil premium funding, which is the extra government support for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from service families, is well above average and in this school relates to pupils who qualify for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs at school action is well below the national average, but the proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement is well above the national average.
- The school teaches a curriculum that helps children connect their learning to the perspectives of children in other parts of the world.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In Key Stage 1, ensure that pupils make consistently rapid progress and that a higher proportion attain Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - further developing the quality of teaching, ensuring that there is a high level of challenge in all lessons so that it is consistently outstanding
 - sharing best practice within and between Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children begin nursery with skill levels well below those typical for their age. During the Early Years Foundation Stage they make rapid progress and are at levels expected for their age by the time they start Key Stage 1.
- Although rates of progress in Key Stage 1 are improving they are currently good over time. Careful identification of staff training needs has ensured that basic calculation, mental arithmetic and writing for enjoyment have enabled pupils to make faster progress but rapid progress is yet to be consistently achieved across Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education but too few are currently achieving the higher level of attainment, Level 3, at the end of Year 2.
- At the end of Year 2, attainment in reading and writing is now just above the national average. Standards in mathematics have over time been weaker, but positive steps have been taken to raise pupils' achievement, and progress has shown improvement during the current academic year.
- In the Year 1 2012 phonics screening check (linking letters and sounds), the proportion of pupils performing in line with national expectations was average. The school correctly identified this as an area for improvement and the proportion of pupils in 2013 achieving the expected level is likely to have gone up by more than a third.
- Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium are attaining more highly in reading, writing and mathematics than similar pupils nationally and their peers in the school. This is due to pupils making better progress than their peers during their time at the school.
- Those pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs also do better than similar pupils nationally.
- Pupils from a range of ethnic heritages make the same good progress made by their classmates. This demonstrates the school's very effective promotion of equality of opportunity. Pupils develop good speaking skills during their time at the school. They talk to the whole class, in small groups or in pairs very confidently. This is the case from nursery, where children were seen talking about jungle animals and the sounds they make with confidence and good listening skills for their age.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding due to excellent resourcing and a high level of challenge.
- Challenge in teaching at Key Stage 1 has ensured good teaching over time. Growing proportions of teaching are outstanding, but this level of teaching is not yet consistent or sustained over time to ensure sufficient pupils attain the higher level of achievement, Level 3, in Year 2.
- In the Nursery, children benefit from a stimulating learning environment. Tasks are well matched to the needs and interests of the children. The outdoor area is well used to enhance learning through the development of imagination and curiosity, for example children were observed building animal enclosures with three-dimensional blocks and examining snails and flowers with adults. Children had a fascination and were very inquisitive about the snails and made good links to their work exploring jungles.
- Reception Year children benefit from challenge in their learning and as a result make rapid jumps in their understanding. This was observed during a session about time, when adults used an imaginative range of resourcing and techniques to extend children's understanding.
- Teachers ensure pupils are clear about what they are learning. Effective use of questioning helps adults to put right any misconceptions. They make good use of targets and marking in books so pupils know what they are working towards.

- Teachers and adults have high expectations of what children and pupils can achieve. They plan and teach lessons which aim to stretch pupils academically but also aim to systematically develop their spiritual, moral and cultural awareness.
- Teaching assistants play a central role in ensuring that pupils eligible for free school meals, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make as good progress as their peers. Teaching strategies and resourcing are carefully targeted to help tackle pupils' specific difficulties and build their skills and confidence.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary in classrooms and pupils move around the school site calmly and show a high degree of respect for adults and their peers. No time is wasted because staff make their very high expectations clear and manage behaviour so that it makes a strong contribution to learning.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners and are very proud of their school and successes in their learning.
- Pupils have a very strong sense of right and wrong because the school promotes moral development very well. As a result discrimination is not tolerated by the pupils and they have an age-appropriate understanding of what this means.
- Bullying in all its forms is not tolerated by the school, pupils have a clear understanding of the different forms it can take, such as name calling or cyber bullying, and know what to do to tackle it should it occur. Pupils and parents and carers feel bullying is rare but that leaders deal with such incidents quickly and effectively.
- The school fosters excellent relationships as the school staff encourage pupils to show manners and kindness towards others. Pupils respect each other's views and listen very carefully to adults and their classmates. They work exceptionally well in pairs or small groups showing careful listening skills and their work benefits from this focused learning.
- Leaders analyse behaviour to identify patterns or issues. They proactively plan to improve behaviour when individual difficulties emerge. This has ensured that individual pupils' behaviour has improved over time. The school works well with other agencies and families to review progress and sustain improvements.
- Attendance has improved and is average; punctuality is excellent. The school has systems in place to encourage attendance.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe in the school and in familiar environments. For example, a Year 2 pupil explained to inspectors how to stay safe on the London Underground, 'You always have to stay behind the yellow line and mind the gap or you might get hurt.'

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leaders at all levels are exceptionally ambitious for the school and individual pupils. They have put in place highly rigorous monitoring and evaluation to ensure they have an accurate analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Rapid improvements have been made as a result, in particular the rates of progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the eradication of teaching that is less than good and the growing proportion of outstanding teaching through the school.
- The evaluation of the school is based on a comprehensive analysis of teaching and learning over time. As a result, leaders have been able to develop very focused and effective plans for further improvement.
- Management of teachers' performance is focused on making the school an even better place for learners. Targets and their evaluation are linked to the school's development priorities, pupils' progress and the teachers' performance over the academic year. This information is used to ensure that pay awarded is reflective of performance.

- Leaders' systems for checking the quality of teaching are very accurate and help individual teachers to improve through a sharp focus on monitoring the implementation of required improvements and developments over time.
- Subject leaders are now very effective in their roles. This has been due to the coaching of senior leaders and the effective use of training. They have led improvements to both English and mathematics which have resulted in improvements in the performance of pupils across the school. Additionally they hold other staff to account through pupil progress meetings. These have been highly effective in ensuring that potential underachievement is quickly tackled and that good or better progress is being made throughout the school.
- The curriculum provides highly memorable learning experiences throughout the school. Trips, visitors and contexts of interest to the pupils are used to engage them in their learning. A recent Year 2 trip to the London Eye and Houses of Parliament was used to inspire pupils in their writing. Teachers engage pupils exceptionally well in their learning and pupils are very enthusiastic about school as a result.
- The school offers families a range of workshops which help parents and carers to be more involved in the learning of their children. These are very well attended by parents and carers from all backgrounds served by the school. Leaders use feedback from parents and carers to help ensure they are providing workshops that parents and carers want and at times they can access them.
- There are very strong links with the parish church and the local community, which help the school to develop pupils' spiritual and cultural understanding extremely well. The school takes great care of pupils developing them intellectually and emotionally. The real sense of belonging to the school and very good moral development are reflected in their outstanding behaviour.
- The local authority has provided appropriate support for this good school. It has supported the improving performance of teaching with teachers attending courses aimed at securing a higher grade of teaching. The Archdiocese of Southwark has also appropriately supported the school since the last inspection.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors ensure they are clear about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are accurate in their understanding of the current quality of teaching. They understand how the school is performing in relation to other schools nationally. They are proficient in asking challenging questions and undertaking their own investigations rather than relying on information given to them by the co-headteachers or other leaders. Due to their passion for continuous improvement they are proactive in seeking training to develop their skills individually and collectively. They are committed to equality of opportunity and therefore have invested time in ensuring that pupil premium is used to best effect, improving the outcomes for pupils in English and mathematics. They have very clear areas of responsibility and regularly visit the school. They share the vision of the school and state that they have the same passion for the school to secure the very best educational achievement for every child. As a result they take a keen interest in ensuring that the performance management of teaching is effective and that pay is linked to securing good or better outcomes for children. The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met.

What inspection judgements mean

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

School details

Unique reference number	100631
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	412693

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

Type of school	Infant and Nursery
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Chrisopher Basden
Headteacher	Catherine Davis and Ewa Ostrynska
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 January 2010
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