

# St Bernadette Catholic Junior School

Atkins Road, Clapham Park, London, SW12 0AB

**Inspection dates** 12–13 September 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils from varied backgrounds get on very well together. This is because of the school's strong commitment to developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural qualities. Pupils thrive in the school's caring ethos, and feel safe and happy. They behave well and respect adults and one another. The school is popular with parents and carers.
- Pupils achieve well during their time at the school. They learn well and, from typically average starting points, they make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. No group falls behind. Pupils with a range of additional needs make particularly strong progress. This reflects the overall good quality of the teaching.
- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection, and is now good overall, with examples of outstanding teaching. Marking is thorough and helpful.
- Tasks are interesting and usually matched well to pupils' individual needs, enabling all groups to make similar progress.
- The improvement in teaching is the result of continual vigilance by school leaders, who check the performance of individual teachers and ensure that improvements are made.
- School leaders and governors know their school well and are honest and open in their self-evaluation. As a result of their ambition and determination to meet all the recommendations from the previous inspection, the school's performance has improved significantly, and its overall effectiveness is now good.
- The curriculum is stimulating and the school is recognised in the community for its sporting excellence. The additional funding for primary sports is used well to promote sporting opportunities for the pupils.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teachers do not always set the most able pupils sufficiently demanding tasks in every subject to enable them to do their best work.
- The playground is too congested when all the pupils are out at the same time, and this is somewhat intimidating for younger pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons across a range of subjects, almost all observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, looked at samples of their work and discussed their learning with them.
- Meetings were held with: leaders and managers; pupils; the Chair of the Governing Body and one other member; and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors took account of the views of staff in 21 questionnaires.
- There were 14 responses to Parent View, the online survey of parents and carers. Inspectors considered these, and also spoke to a number of parents and carers during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including: the school's own views of how well it is doing; its plans for the future; information on pupils' attainment and progress; safeguarding information; records relating to behaviour and safety; and the governing body minutes.

## Inspection team

Natalia Power, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jameel Hassan

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- St Bernadette is an average-sized junior school, with two classes in each of the four year-groups.
- Almost half of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding provided for children looked after by the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent or carer in the armed services. This proportion is higher than the national average. At St Bernadette, nearly all of the pupils who qualify for the pupil premium are currently eligible for free school meals or have been at some stage over the past six years, with very few being in the care of the local authority or with a parent or carer in the armed services.
- Almost all of pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages, and this proportion is much higher than usual. Around one third of pupils speak English as an additional language, and this proportion is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is higher than average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has close links with a nearby Catholic infant and nursery school, but has its own governing body and leadership team.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Teachers should make sure that they set demanding enough tasks, in all subjects, not just in reading, writing and mathematics, to help the most able pupils do as well as they can.
- Leaders should ensure that the playground never becomes too congested, and that all pupils have space in which to run about and play ball games safely.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils achieve well. They make at least the progress expected of them, and often more, during their time at the school. From starting points which are generally average, they leave school with results in the national tests taken at the end of Year 6 that are generally above average, particularly in reading.
- The school goes to considerable lengths to provide support for pupils who are in danger of falling behind. As a result, all groups of pupils make strong progress and no group falls behind. This shows how pupils benefit from the school's commitment to equality for all.
- Inspection evidence, obtained from observing lessons, looking at samples of pupils' work and talking to them, confirms the pattern of good achievement indicated by national and school data. Information from the school about the progress made by pupils in individual classes also shows a strong pattern overall. This consistency of progress is the result of close monitoring of the quality of teaching by school leaders.
- Pupils from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages, and those who speak English as an additional language, make similar progress to others because their needs are identified early and effective support put in place.
- The school is responsive in putting in place additional support for disabled pupils and those with a range of special educational needs, both within the classroom and in small withdrawal groups. As a result, these pupils make particularly strong progress.
- Pupils do particularly well in reading, because the school encourages them to love reading. They are given interesting books to read, and their records show that the school carefully checks that they have understood what they are reading. Year 3 pupils are able to piece words together, using their knowledge of phonics (sounds and letters), and by Year 6 pupils consistently do well in their national tests. In 2012, for example, pupils were almost half a year ahead of pupils nationally in reading.
- The school has a positive effect on the learning of pupils eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium. School leaders and governors check the progress of all these pupils and keep a close eye on how effectively the additional support for them is used. As a result, they make similar progress to all others in the school in both English and mathematics, and there is no appreciable gap between how they are doing and others in the school. In 2012, for example, there was virtually no gap in performance, and those eligible for the additional funding made similar progress to others in the school.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers generally expect a good deal from their pupils, and the overall good quality of teaching is reflected in the strong progress pupils make in their learning.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. Inspectors observed that, even near the start of term, pupils already knew what was expected of them, and they understood and responded quickly to the teachers' reward systems.
- Most lessons move at a brisk pace and pupils are busy throughout. In one fast-paced Year 4 English lesson, for example, pupils were busily engaged in preparing to write a newspaper report. The pupils were excited by the opportunity to speak to the whole class, listen to their classmates, and take responsibility for planning their article. Each task was very well matched to the pupils' varying abilities, enabling them to make rapid progress in their learning.
- There are occasions, however, when the most able pupils are set tasks which are not demanding enough to provide them with the spark they need to make progress at an even faster rate. The most able pupils generally do well in the national tests in English and mathematics, but in other subjects, such as science, they are not always given sufficient challenge.
- Teachers question pupils well, encouraging them to think for themselves. They frequently draw

pupils' names at random, and this keeps pupils on their toes, as they do not know in advance if they will be selected to answer.

- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the learning of pupils, particularly those who have a range of additional needs, helping them individually and in small groups, and working in effective partnership with the class teachers. This enables pupils who struggle with their work or with learning English to make progress in line with others.
- Marking provides pupils with clear advice on how they can improve their thoughts and ideas. Teachers have high standards of how work should be presented, and insist on neat work, with full dates and headings. As a result, pupils take a pride in their work, and use their teachers' comments to improve it.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and welcoming to visitors. Inspectors enjoyed being welcomed to each lesson by a designated pupil who explained what the task was. Pupils explained that this was something they routinely did for all visitors.
- Pupils have positive attitudes in the classroom and want to learn. They respond well to adults, and are polite and considerate to one another.
- In the playground, pupils are ready to take turns, and try not to hurt one another when running or playing football in the enclosed space for ball games. However, when they are all out, it is difficult for them to avoid occasionally running into one another. There are quiet areas for those who dislike crowds. Nevertheless, the playground is too crowded for the numbers using it.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well, and as a result pupils respect one another's heritages and get on very well together. The school is highly inclusive, and school leaders ensure that there is no discrimination. The school promotes a strong community ethos and, as a result of close links with a nearby infant school, pupils and parents and carers know one another well, and this results in pupils feeling secure. The school goes to considerable lengths to provide for the emotional well-being of its pupils, even following some individuals up, to make sure they have settled well into secondary school.
- Pupils feel safe at the school and understand how to keep themselves safe. They told inspectors that there was no bullying at the school, such as racist or cyber bullying, but that some pupils could be unkind to one another. Some described the behaviour of a few individuals as 'annoying'. However, they know whom to turn to if they have any worries and are confident that these will be quickly dealt with. All parents and carers who responded to the online survey of their views or who spoke to inspectors agreed that their children are safe and happy at the school.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- Leadership and management are good, because school leaders, working closely with governors, ensure that teachers teach well and pupils learn well. The headteacher, ably supported by her deputy, has created a happy and harmonious school. In their uniformly positive responses to the questionnaire, and in discussion with inspectors, staff showed that they feel valued and supported.
- Parents and carers told inspectors of good communications between school and home. They feel well informed. This swift communication, often by text messaging, is a powerful way of ensuring pupils' good attendance.
- Leaders and managers are strongly focused on school improvement. Since the previous inspection, they have worked successfully to improve teaching and the contribution made by teaching assistants. They check pupils' progress carefully, so that no group falls behind, and all make good progress. This sustained analysis of pupils' progress has ensured that the large

proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding do much better than average. Leaders know their school well. Plans for future improvement cover the right priorities and, in most cases, have a clear and achievable timetable for implementation. As a result of this forward movement, the school is well placed to improve further.

- School leaders support their teachers well, and ensure through frequent classroom observations that teaching is good overall. Books are regularly checked to make sure that pupils are making good progress. Any recommendations for improvement in the quality of teaching are followed up. This has resulted in pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching over time now being judged as good, rather than satisfactory as in the previous inspection. Leaders and governors use the information from the leaders' careful monitoring to decide on the teachers' movements up the salary scale to ensure good value for money.
- The local authority knows the school well, and has given it good support in its journey of improvement.
- The school keeps pupils safe and ensures that those who work with them have been properly checked. Though there are relatively few playground incidents, however the playground becomes so congested at playtime that a serious accident could happen if the situation is not addressed. The school accepts that pupils feel happier when there are fewer out at any time, and that plans to improve the playtime experience of the pupils have not yet been drawn up.
- The curriculum prepares pupils well for the next stage of schooling and offers them a good range of experiences beyond the classroom, including many exciting outings, clubs and activities. Sporting activities are a strong feature of the school, and pupils are successful in a range of sports, winning many cups and trophies. The additional primary sports funding has been put to good effect to ensure that this strength of the curriculum continues.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors play an active part in the life of the school and know it well. They know that the teaching is good, and many governors have visited lessons to assure themselves of its quality. They are well informed of the school's performance through detailed headteacher's reports.
  - Governors understand how well pupils are doing in comparison with those in other schools, and are familiar with the comparative data on performance in the online Ofsted School Data Dashboard. They have been a little less successful, however, in requesting data on the most able pupils, and this has led to leaders and teachers having a less sharp focus on these pupils in the classroom.
  - Governors have a clear understanding of the link between teachers' pay and the progress that pupils are making, and this ensures good value for money.
  - Governors keep a firm hand on the school's budget. They carefully check the uses to which pupil premium funding is put, making sure that it benefits those for whom it is intended.
  - Governors are well trained and effectively carry out their statutory duties, including safeguarding and ensuring equality of opportunity.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100628
<b>Local authority</b>	Lambeth
<b>Inspection number</b>	425508

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	242
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kate Peacock
<b>Headteacher</b>	Deborah Hogan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8673 2061
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