

St Saviour's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Verulam Avenue, Walthamstow, London, E17 8ER

Inspection dates 19–20 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The exceptional leadership of the inspirational executive headteacher, in partnership with the highly focused head of school and the strong senior and middle leadership team, is successfully accelerating the rate of the school's improvement.
- Over the last three years, achievement has improved year on year in every key stage.
- Strong leadership of teaching and learning, together with effective management of teachers' performance, is giving rise to consistently good and, sometimes outstanding, teaching.
- A wide variety of tailor-made support makes sure that all groups of pupils make rapid progress and learning gaps are quickly closed.
- The rich learning environment, combined with teachers' enthusiasm, instils a love of learning and ensures that all pupils want to learn.
- The school's caring values, which are at the heart of its work, ensure that pupils' behaviour is consistently good and everyone feels safe and cared for well.
- Members of the governing body are highly knowledgeable about the school and play a significant part in making important decisions which drive the school forward.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to ensure all pupils maximise their achievement.
- On a few occasions some teachers do not listen closely enough to what pupils say and alter their teaching accordingly.
- There are a few times when the pace of pupils' learning slows.
- The presentation of pupils' work and their handwriting is not as neat as it should be.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, 40 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- Eight joint observations of teaching and learning were conducted with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, head of school, senior leaders, members of the governing body, the local authority, staff and groups of pupils.
- The inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read.
- The inspectors spoke to parents and took account of the 11 responses to the online Parent View survey.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised pupils' workbooks and looked at school policies, including those relating to safeguarding and equality, minutes of meetings of the governing body and planning documents.
- The inspectors took account of the 32 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Barbara Atcheson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Samuel Ofori-Kyereh	Additional Inspector
Angela Podmore	Additional Inspector
Teresa Keily	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Saviour's Primary School is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, but most speak English fluently and very few are at the early stages of learning English.
- One third of the pupils are known to be eligible for extra funding provided for looked after children and pupils eligible for free school meals (pupil premium). This is above the national average.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action and those who are supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are above average.
- The school exceeds the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club for its pupils.
- In September 2011 the school entered a hard federation with St Mary's Church of England Primary School and the schools have one governing body and an executive head teacher. The schools also share two deputy headteachers, one assistant headteacher and a middle leadership team.
- From 2008 to 2013 the school went through a major scheme of redevelopment and is now mostly housed in a purpose-built building.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding and further raise achievement by ensuring that all teachers:
 - listen to their pupils and adapt their teaching in response to pupils' answers
 - know that every minute counts and move learning along at a brisk pace
 - insist that all work is at a high level of presentation and handwriting is neat
 - work on a tailor-made staff development programme that shares best practice and enables everyone to become an outstanding teacher.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The key to the school's success in ensuring that achievement has improved in every key stage over the last three years is due to the highly focused attention and effective actions of senior leaders. Leaders ensure that no barrier, such as major building works, slows the rapid pace of improvement. During this period the school has worked effectively to nurture a love of learning in all pupils and this supports their good achievement.
- The school places the promotion of equality of opportunity at the heart of all its work. There is no discrimination. All teachers are held to account for pupils' achievement and pupils' progress is checked at regular meetings. If any pupil is seen to underperform, extra help is quickly arranged to help them catch up.
- Small learning groups help accelerate learning for those pupils in Years 2, 5 and 6 who have gaps in their learning in both literacy and mathematics. For example, having made sure that pupils in the Year 5 group were secure in how to read and plot coordinates, the teacher strengthened their new found skills with a game of 'battle ships'.
- Smaller support groups help pupils such as those who benefit from pupil premium, higher achieving pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to close any learning gaps and achieve as well as their class mates. For example, pupil premium pupils showed real pleasure in reading in a guided reading group and, as a result, they read fluently and with great understanding.
- Lunchtime, after-school and homework clubs, together with a Saturday club which has a much wider approach to learning, strengthen and secure pupils' learning and accelerate achievement.
- Nursery children benefit from outstanding teaching which inspires their love of learning and desire to do well. Nursery children happily share their targets and enjoy tackling the 'three challenges' they have to undertake each day.
- The legacy of when the school was in special measures three years ago has had to be overcome. Pupils in the current Year 6, left Key Stage 1 with standards significantly below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Due to the highly effective strategies to accelerate their learning, all groups made rapid progress from Years 2 to 5 and left Year 6 with standards significantly above the national average in reading, writing and English grammar and in line with the national average in mathematics.
- The proportion of more able pupils reaching or surpassing the higher Level 5 in 2013 was significantly above the national average in reading, writing and English grammar and above in mathematics.
- In 2013, Year 6 pupil premium pupils achieved as well as their classmates and better than all pupils nationally in reading and writing. They were a term behind their classmates in mathematics.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 have risen from significantly below the national average to broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics over the last three years. All groups achieved better than the national average in the 2013 Year 1 phonics (letters and sounds) test.
- The five 'story gardens', designed to a very high standard as part of the new buildings, provide a vivid backcloth for story time club and promote pupils' deepening love of books and reading. For example, one garden represents Alice in Wonderland and another The Hobbit in the woodland garden. Pupils say that even when it is raining they look out of the window onto the garden and go over the story in their minds.

The quality of teaching is good

- Work is set at the right level of challenge for all pupils because teachers know their pupils well and use information from assessment to plan lessons at exactly the right level of challenge.
- Good relationships ensure that pupils enjoy their work and try hard. For example, a group of less able Year 6 pupils readily took part in and relished the quick-fire repartee that accompanied the fast-paced learning about how to use a formula to find the area of a shape. The active and engaging teaching style made them eager to learn, quick to share what they had learned and reflect accurately on how well they were achieving their targets.
- Pupils rise to their teachers' high expectations of work and behaviour. The models teachers provide for pupils are usually of a high quality. However, the same high expectations are not always given to the standards of pupils' presentation or the neatness of their writing.
- Effective marking ensures pupils know what they have to do to improve their work and there is a good dialogue between pupil and teacher which secures learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use questions well to probe pupils' understanding. The pace of learning is usually quick, although this is not always the case, and where the pace drops a few pupils let their attention wander.
- Pupils' learning builds securely on what pupils have learned before, because teachers make regular checks on what they are doing throughout the lesson. Probing questioning and the strong focus on keeping track of pupils' gains in knowledge and understanding underpin their rapid progress. Occasionally, when teachers do not see quickly enough that pupils have grasped a concept, the pace of learning for these pupils slows.
- Teaching assistants play a major role in supporting pupils' learning, both in class and in small groups. The help they provide is effective because they are well trained and share the teachers' high expectations.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. The school values of truth, love, tenacity, respect, serenity, faith and forgiveness are evident in all aspects of school life. Pupils appreciate the values, practise them and refer to them daily. As a result, pupils' behaviour is good within this caring and happy school community.
- Rates of attendance are above average. Pupils enjoy coming to school because learning is fun and is at the right level of challenge for them. Relationships with all staff are good and pupils want to please. One pupil said that she loved school because she wanted to improve her writing, literacy and mathematics so that she could do well in the future.
- Very little time is wasted and for the most part pupils settle quickly to lessons; but, in the few lessons where the pace of learning slows, a few pupils lose concentration and fidget.
- Pupils know how well they are doing because they use their targets to help them aim high. 'Working walls' give them strategies to help them learn independently and good relationships give them the confidence to have a go and make mistakes without losing face.
- Pupils know about the different sorts of bullying and how to deal with it. They are knowledgeable about how to stay safe on the internet, in school and at home. They say they feel safe in school, because bullying is so rare and know that there will always be someone who will listen to them if they have any concerns.
- A large majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View said that their children are happy and feel safe at school.
- Parents and carers appreciate the benefits of the school's breakfast and after-school club and pupils enjoy the food, especially the omelettes at breakfast time, the companionship and games.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The executive headteacher has high aspirations for the school and its pupils and conveys her expectations convincingly to all staff, governors and senior leaders. She has focused all of her energies on picking the school up and turning it round by following every initiative through to its successful completion. Both she and the head of school are outstanding practitioners in their own right and lead by example.
- The school benefits from a strong team of senior leaders and middle managers who are shared with St Mary's Church of England Primary School, the partner school in the federation. Middle leaders shadow senior leaders as they drive improvement forward, best practice is shared, leadership delegated and the rate of improvement quickened. This sharing of resources and expertise gives added value to all that the school does.
- Senior leaders share the executive headteacher's unswerving focus on improvement and, as a result, the school is moving forward rapidly, despite difficulties such as the major redevelopment of the whole school site.
- The school improvement partner rightly provides light touch support for this good school. Staff, senior leaders and members of the governing body have a very clear understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas in need of development because communication is so good. Rigorous checks on the school's performance against local and national levels ensure that the school works successfully towards challenging targets.
- Highly effective checks on teaching and learning, which identify key areas for teachers to improve their practice, have ensured that teaching is consistently good and an increasing amount is outstanding. Teachers say that support from the federation and a group of local schools, together with high quality professional development, has helped to improve their teaching and raise pupils' achievement.
- The school is a provider of training for local schools who take part in training for teaching assistants and newly qualified teachers.
- Teachers' performance is managed very effectively. Personal targets are set for all staff and any support needed is identified and provided. Reviews of staff performance tackle weaknesses and recognise and reward improvements in teaching.
- The school has carefully planned how to spend the new primary sports funding wisely. Sports specialists have been booked to train staff to ensure that the benefits of the funding are sustained after it ceases. Taster sessions are to be organised to widen pupils' experience of different sports and those they might not encounter, such as horse riding and yachting. Lunchtime activities are to be increased and the variety of after-school clubs extended. Pupils already enjoy the benefit of swimming lessons, but the school plans to introduce it earlier, in Year 1.
- The highly creative curriculum captures pupils' interests and ensures an enthusiasm for learning. 'Stunning starters' and 'fabulous finishes' to topics centred round good quality literature mean that the school has no reluctant learners and every pupil has the opportunity to succeed.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The members of the governing body play a significant role in the strategic direction of the school and the rapid improvement that the school has made since the previous inspection. They know the school very well and have a highly accurate view of the school's performance, including the quality of teaching and how pupils' test results compare to those of other similar schools. The governors realise that more work has to be done to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching. They understand about the management of teachers' performance and how it must be used to improve the quality of teaching if pay rises are to be awarded. Governors are fully involved with setting targets for the school and hold it rigorously to account. They ensure that statutory duties such as safeguarding are met and that financial resources are managed well. They know that pupils known to be eligible for extra funding are beginning to close any gaps they may have in attainment because money allocated for this purpose is used appropriately.

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	103089
Local authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	425556

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	430
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Heathfield
Headteacher	Beverley Hall (Executive Headteacher) Faye Rider (Head of School)
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 November 2013
Telephone number	020 8520 0612
Fax number	020 8520 7822
Email address	head@st-saviours.waltham.sch.uk

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