

St George's Catholic Primary School

Sudbury Hill, Harrow, Middlesex, HA1 3SB

Inspection dates 21–22 November 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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make consistently good progress, many from low starting points, and reach standards that are above average in English and mathematics by the time they leave.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers plan interesting lessons, give pupils plenty of opportunity to learn from each other and question pupils very effectively.
- Leaders are setting increasingly challenging targets for pupils' progress. Checks on progress are regular and action is taken quickly when someone is falling behind. As a result, progress is accelerated.
- Pupils leave the school as articulate young people with a love of learning extremely well prepared for the next stage in their education. Their behaviour in lessons and around school is exemplary.
- The curriculum is often inspiring, particularly in the way that it promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is a harmonious community where everyone is valued and cared for.
- The whole-school community is enthusiastic, committed and totally behind what the school is doing. Governors get fully involved in school life, know it very well and provide good challenge and support to the leadership team.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In writing, progress is sometimes slower than in other areas, particularly for boys. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write in a wide range of subjects and styles, handwriting is often untidy and not all pupils know how they can improve their work.
- In a few lessons, the most able are not given challenging enough tasks and problems, and this slows down their progress.
- When checking on the quality of teaching in lessons, leaders do not always focus on the progress of different groups. As a result, the improvements in teaching required to enable pupils to make even faster progress are not precisely identified.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 32 lessons, of which six were joint observations with either the acting headteacher or the acting deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons. They also looked at pupils' books and observed other aspects of the school's work.
- Meetings were held with governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and teachers. Pupils took inspectors on a tour of the school. The inspectors also listened to pupils reading and spoke to library assistants about their reading habits and their roles. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 109 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to parents and carers at the school gate. Inspectors reviewed 40 questionnaire responses from staff.
- A number of documents were looked at, including the school's own information relating to pupils' achievement, the school's self-evaluation summary and development plan, planning documentation, records relating to behaviour, attendance and checks on teaching, policy documents and documents relating to safeguarding. The inspectors also looked at the school's website and a website specially set up for the inspection team.

Inspection team

Martin Marsh, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Victoria Turner

Additional inspector

Simon Adams

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- One in 11 pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding which supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked-after children or children of service families). In this school, all the eligible pupils are those entitled to free school meals.
- One in 15 pupils are disabled or have special educational needs and are supported by school action. This proportion is below average. One in 25 of the school's pupils are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs, which is also a below-average proportion.
- Three quarters of pupils belong to ethnic groups other than White British and almost half the pupils do not have English as a first language.
- In 2013, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- During the inspection an acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher were in post. A substantive headteacher has been appointed and is due to start in January 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - developing the ability of all leaders to identify precisely how teaching can be improved so that all groups of pupils make even more rapid progress in lessons
 - making sure that work set for the most able pupils provides opportunities for them to work on challenging tasks and problems.
- Raise the attainment of pupils in writing, particularly for boys, by:
 - making sure that pupils know precisely how to improve their work
 - giving more opportunities for pupils to write in a variety of styles and subjects
 - improving the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the school with skills and knowledge below levels typical for their age, especially in aspects of communication and literacy. Regardless of their starting points, they make good progress so that when they leave school in Year 6 they are attaining above national averages in English and mathematics.
- Children get an excellent start to learning to read. They quickly learn their letters and the sounds they make (phonics) because programmes are well taught and adults are well trained. By the time they leave school they are extremely fluent readers and have developed a real love of reading. Pupils talked to inspectors about how much they enjoyed Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* and Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and how inspiring they found the visits of authors to the school such as Cathy Cassidy.
- There is a growing number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school's increasing emphasis on developing pupils' speaking skills is enabling them to often make rapid progress. All pupils are benefitting from this changing emphasis and nearly all are extremely articulate by the time they reach Year 6.
- Progress is consistently good across all year groups and sometimes better than this, particularly in Reception where the very strong provision both indoors and outside is resulting in current children making rapid gains in learning.
- The attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals was in line with that of other pupils in the 2013 end-of-Key Stage 2 statutory assessments in mathematics and writing, but a term behind other pupils in reading. However, their progress is faster because of their lower starting points. The careful checking on their progress and the extra one-to-one and small-group teaching that the extra funding provides is very effective in narrowing the gap in attainment across the school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good support in class and in small groups out of class, enabling them to make similar progress to other pupils. Pupils from the wide range of different ethnic minority groups make similarly good progress. The school is very successful in providing equality of opportunity for learning.
- Progress in writing, particularly for boys, is not as fast as it is in reading and mathematics. This is because there are not enough opportunities for them to write in other subjects and in a wide range of styles. Sometimes pupils do not know how to improve their writing and so tend to 'practice their faults'.

The quality of teaching is good

- In all lessons there are excellent relationships between adults and children and among the children themselves. As a result, pupils listen intently and respond thoughtfully to the teacher and each other and consequently learn very effectively when they work together collaboratively.
- Teachers plan lessons which motivate the pupils and often inspire them. This is because they have good subject knowledge and so can really deepen pupils' knowledge. They use resources very effectively and ask challenging questions. In a music lesson Year 2, pupils were learning to write a music score and sing it with expression. They made outstanding progress because the teacher was getting them to think hard about different levels of pitch and the effect that these had on the music. She also enhanced their learning using a piece of computer software.
- The pace of lessons is good and teachers make regular checks on learning, enabling them to support and extend pupils and reshape tasks where necessary. Additional adults know what they are doing in all parts of the lesson and support groups and individuals well, making a significant contribution to learning.
- Teachers generally set pupils tasks that are well matched to their needs and abilities but occasionally the most able are not given challenging enough problems and tasks to work on and

so do not always make rapid enough progress. Marking is thorough and generally gives good guidance as to how pupils can improve their work. Sometimes, when pupils are asked to write, targets for how they might improve their work are not precise enough and so pupils 'practice their faults'. Also teachers sometimes do not insist on high enough expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils love coming to school and are avid learners. They are extremely well mannered and welcoming. In lessons and around the school their behaviour is impeccable. They work exceptionally hard, listen to each other intently and work together with a high level of collaboration. Around the school they show tremendous respect for each other and respond to the high standard of care shown to them by adults by responding in a similar way to each other.
- All parents and carers who responded to Parent View or who spoke to inspectors at the school gate felt that their children were happy, safe and looked after very well, and the pupils told inspectors the same thing. There is negligible bullying and pupils know what to do if it should happen. There are very few incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Pupils understand about different types of bullying, including cyber and mobile phone bullying, and understand how to keep safe on the internet.
- Pupils are exceptionally proud of their school and respond enthusiastically to the many opportunities they get to take on roles of responsibility, for example in being a 'buddy' to Reception children, serving on the school or eco councils, being a library assistant or running the school shop.
- Participation levels in sports are high and pupils understand how living an active life keeps them healthy. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy being sport leaders. The school has recently been awarded the silver kitemark for physical education and is working towards becoming a 'knowledge centre' for physical education in the local area.
- Pupils have a very highly developed sense of right and wrong and strong moral values. An outstanding Year 6 personal, social and health education lesson enabled pupils to articulate highly sophisticated views about the rights and responsibilities of individuals related to the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. During the inspection the school celebrated Diversity Week and the pupils were clear that this was to help them understand about other people's differences and the beliefs and cultures of others, which they do. This shows the school is successful in tackling discrimination and fostering good relationships.
- Attendance has been improving over a number of years and is now above average and pupils are typically punctual for school.

The leadership and management are good

- The acting headteacher and her acting deputy have been very successful in putting systems and practices in place to ensure that pupils' progress accelerates. Progress targets set to pupils in the last two years have been far more challenging and teachers and pupils have responded to this challenge and progress is now faster than it was previously.
- All staff are totally behind what the leadership of the school is doing and are totally committed. Checks on pupils' progress are rigorous and regular, and support programmes are quickly put in place for pupils in danger of falling behind. This has been achieved without compromising the strong personal and social outcomes for pupils that contribute so much to the school's excellent ethos and the pupils' outstanding behaviour.
- The school engages well with parents and carers, who value the information they get on their child's progress and the workshop sessions where they can learn about how their children are taught and how they can support them at home. Parents and carers spoken to at the school gate commented on 'the strong sense of community', how the school 'can always sort out issues'

and the good transition arrangements as pupils move to secondary school.

- Leaders at all levels regularly check on the quality of teaching and judgements are accurate, with some good areas identified for teachers to improve. Teachers value the support they get to improve their teaching and the high value the school places on their training and development. Sometimes, lesson observations do not focus enough on the progress of different groups of pupils, for example the progress of able pupils, and so the changes needed to improve teaching so that all pupils make rapid progress are not as precise as they could be.
- Pupils are very well looked after and cared for. The Breakfast Club, where pupils can get a hot breakfast, and after-school clubs are extremely well run and very well supported. Pupils receiving free school meals benefit from these clubs through the extra government funding. Pupils and their families whose circumstances make them vulnerable are well supported, some by the school counsellor. This enables them to participate fully in school and learn well.
- The curriculum is very well enhanced by a large range of trips and visitors to school that are highly valued by the pupils, who told inspectors how much they enjoyed their learning because 'every day was different' and teachers make learning 'fun'. The strong promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development makes a significant contribution to the strong Christian ethos and the pupils' outstanding behaviour.
- A specialist sports teacher works across the school. The school already provides coaching in 14 different sports and is using its additional government funding to provide additional provision for dance and yoga and to train younger staff in teaching physical education so that the impact of the extra funding is sustained over time.
- Leaders value the good support of the local authority and a review it conducted a year ago was very helpful in helping the school to improve.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very effective and has responded positively to the increasingly diverse school population by taking active steps to ensure that this diversity is represented on the governing body. They have a good understanding of how well the school is doing, how it compares to others and what it needs to do to improve because they are knowledgeable about the school's performance data and the quality of teaching. This enables them to challenge the school appropriately and support it in making plans for the future. They have been fully involved in the formulation of staff appraisal and pay policy and so understand the link between teachers' pay and performance. The effective distribution of financial resources is having a very positive impact on the achievement of pupils eligible for pupil premium. This term a governor has been appointed to check on how the school is meeting its commitment to these pupils. Governors realise the importance of good training and ensure individuals are skilled in performing their roles effectively. The governors give appropriate support to the school in meeting safeguarding responsibilities, including those in relation to recruitment, and the school's systems for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.

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	102234
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	425617

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	473
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Power
Headteacher	Susan O'Reilly (acting)
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 November 2008
Telephone number	020 8422 1272
Fax number	020 8864 5540
Email address	office@stgeorges.harrow.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013