

St Luke's Church of England Primary School

Radnor Street, London, EC1V 3SJ

Inspection dates 28–29 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
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 achieve well and increasing proportions of pupils are making good progress and achieving higher-level scores in mathematics and English than in the recent past.
- Teaching over time is good because most activities are carefully planned to meet pupils' needs. Their work is regularly marked, and teachers give helpful suggestions for improvement. The best teaching ensures that rapid adjustments are made to tasks when pupils' responses show that this is necessary.
- Governors are well informed and understand how well the school is doing. They are prepared to challenge as well as support school leaders.
- The executive headteacher and her team understand what needs to be done to further improve the school. Their priorities include increasing the number of higher-level scores at the end of Key Stage 2 and improving the proportion of outstanding teaching. Staff and governors share this vision and ambition.
- Pupils speak very positively about their school, behave well and treat adults and each other with great courtesy.
- Provision in the school for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teaching is not yet outstanding because pupils who are capable of making more rapid progress are not always asked questions that make them think deeply about topics.
- Teachers do not always use opportunities in science and topic lessons for pupils to develop good writing.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to evaluate their own progress and choose the next steps for improving their own attainment.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 17 lessons or parts of lessons taught by eight teachers. Additional activities included short visits to classrooms to look at the level of challenge for able pupils and interventions for those with specific needs. In addition there were observations during break times, at a school assembly, after school and at a breakfast club.
- A lesson was observed jointly with the executive headteacher and the head of school accompanied an inspector on a series of short visits to classrooms to observe the impact of teaching on the more-able pupils. The special educational needs coordinator also accompanied an inspector on visits to classes to review the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' books were checked to see how well groups of pupils are now progressing in a range of subjects.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, a representative of the governing body, subject and school leaders and a telephone conversation was held with representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of 10 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as informal discussions with parents and carers. The views of the staff were taken into account through meetings and 20 responses to staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed their choice of reading books.
- The school's own attainment records for the current as well as previous academic years were scrutinised in addition to published information on pupils' achievement. Planning documents were examined, as well as records relating to pupils' safety and welfare, including the school's single central record of security checks on staff, the behaviour logs and attendance records.

Inspection team

Patricia MacLachlan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gill Walley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium (extra money provided by the government for pupils including those eligible for free school meals, children in public care and those from service families) is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above the national average. The largest single group of pupils are of White British heritage with other sizeable groups having Bangladeshi, African, Caribbean, Other White or mixed heritages. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is also well above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is well below the national average. The proportions supported at school action plus and with statements of special educational needs are also slightly below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has received additional government sports funding.
- The school has, since the previous inspection, become part of a federation to support another school. The headteacher is now the executive head of both this and a neighbouring school. There is a joint governing body and this school's former deputy headteacher was appointed as head of school at St Luke's at the beginning of this year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding by:
 - setting targets more frequently and sharing them with the pupils so that they are very clear about the connection between their tasks in class and their target grades and so that pupils become more involved in checking their own progress
 - ensuring that all teachers plan consistently challenging activities and open-ended investigations for more-able pupils
- Improve the pace of pupils' progress in writing by:
 - exploiting the opportunities for pupils to write well by giving them explicit guidance about how to meet their writing targets in subject lessons other than English.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment on entry to Nursery has been below that typical of three-year-olds nationally. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the trend is for pupils to make good progress, particularly in communication, language and literacy, because of a rigorous focus on phonics (letters and the sounds they make). This is sustained during the Key Stage 1 years because attainment in reading and writing has risen in recent years.
- By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 there is now an improving trend of attainment in mathematics and English. The majority of pupils in Year 6 made good progress last year because teaching is good and expectations are high.
- School records of current progress as well as scrutiny of pupils' English and mathematics books show that this trend is likely to continue because targets are more ambitious and pupils are producing a higher standard of work than in the past. Achievement is not yet outstanding because pupils are not yet making consistently fast progress in all year groups nor are so many making as rapid progress in writing and mathematics as they are in reading. Fewer pupils reach Level 6 scores in English than in mathematics.
- There is little difference in the progress made between those for whom English is an additional language, those from minority ethnic groups or those with special educational needs and their classmates.
- The pupil premium grant is used effectively to pay for small-group activities in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result many of the pupils in receipt of this funding, particularly in the lower Key Stage 2 years, are now attaining as well or better in English and mathematics than their classmates, measured in average points scores. Although pupils in the current Year 6 are a term behind their peers in writing, as are the current Year 2, the school has focused strategies that aim to narrow these gaps quickly.
- Pupils of all ages enjoy reading and receive good guidance to help improve their skills. Pupils enjoy visiting their well-stocked and comfortable library, and use reference books confidently in class.
- Physical education classes are supplemented with a wide range of well-attended sports clubs and this is helping all pupils to develop a healthy lifestyle.

The quality of teaching is good.

- Teaching is good because strong and supportive relationships are established between all adults and pupils in the classroom and pupils are consequently keen to learn. Well-planned and interesting tasks offer pupils good opportunities to make progress. In the best instances, for example in a Year 1 mathematics session on using different coins to practise addition, pupils learned about different sums of money because the task required them to handle coins and discuss their actions. The teacher posed thought-provoking questions and pupils were guided to use new vocabulary while the more able were given more complicated calculations using fewer coins. As a consequence all groups of pupils made rapid progress but not all teaching stretches the more able pupils so skilfully.
- Pupils understand the accuracy of their answers because teachers mark their work regularly and usually allow time for pupils to respond to their marking in their writing and mathematics books. However, teaching is good rather than outstanding because teachers are not currently involving the pupils in checking their own progress towards attaining their target levels nor are they helping them to understand the precise steps needed to get to a higher level, particularly in their writing in subjects such as science and the humanities.
- Where teaching is best, adults reshape tasks quickly if pupils are not succeeding, to help them to learn at their own pace. Skilled teaching assistants give extended support to pupils who need

additional help to understand tasks.

- Pupils, particularly those capable of making faster progress, are given extension tasks and where teaching is strongest these include open-ended challenges or targeted questions that support deep and extended thinking. However, this is not yet the case in all classes.
- The majority of parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) believe that their children are well taught and receive appropriate homework.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. This is because pupils work very cooperatively with each other, sharing resources and concentrating to complete tasks. Behaviour is good rather than outstanding because pupils are not always able to identify their next steps for independent working and as a consequence are not always able to demonstrate exemplary attitudes to learning.
- Pupils believe that they are well looked after by the adults around them. The climate of friendship and positive support from adults lead to pupils acting considerately and respectfully towards each other and to adults.
- Pupils understand about different types of bullying and how to keep themselves safe. They assert that bullying is very rare and has been dealt with effectively. Older pupils led well-received recent workshops for parents and carers on the prevention of cyber bullying and adults express satisfaction with the school's good management of behaviour.
- Pupils have many opportunities to serve as role models to the younger children and leaders of ecological and other projects.
- Attendance is improving because effective strategies are used to encourage good attendance and punctuality. There is great excitement among pupils about the award of prizes for attendance at celebration assemblies and badges for perfect attendance are worn with pride.
- Parents and carers believe that the school provides a safe and caring environment and inspectors agree. Pupils enjoy coming to school and, as one remarked, 'Everything works well here and everyone is caring because the adults are kind.'
- Pupils know right from wrong and older 'playground angels' are on hand to help defuse any disagreements that may arise. These interactions reinforce moral and social development well.

The leadership and management are good

- The highly effective executive headteacher and the capable head of school have successfully addressed the dip in pupil outcomes that occurred following the previous inspection. They have brought about improvements to the quality of teaching that have now resulted in rising achievement. Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because the pace of progress is not yet consistently rapid among all year and ability groups.
- Strong capacity to improve further is shown in the way good leadership and management have made sure that the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been secured. There is now a stimulating outdoor classroom for early years groups to enjoy a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities.
- The energetic leadership team has developed a robust system for checking teaching, sharing lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' books so that teachers' classroom practice has improved. The performance management system ensures that only those teachers who meet required standards move up the salary scale. The executive headteacher does not avoid difficult conversations about teaching performance if these are necessary.
- Provision to encourage spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely strong.

Pupils reflect on the differences between right and wrong in assemblies and religious or social education lessons. Opportunities to experience sports like fencing and martial arts are very well received, as are subsidised specialist music tuition, theatre visits and workshops with the London Symphony Orchestra. Residential visits to rural areas and participation in innovative 'dreamcatcher' assemblies during which Year 6 pupils interview professional and executive guests in front of the whole school all help to widen their social and cultural horizons. In addition to celebrations in the church, pupils visit other faiths' places of worship to extend their spiritual understanding.

- Physical education classes are supplemented with a wide range of well-attended sports clubs. The primary school sports funding is being used to hire sports and dance coaches who are training the class teachers to improve their skills to support all pupils to develop healthy lifestyles. The impact will be seen in sustainable improvements in the curriculum.
- Leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and this has resulted in good progress, particularly in reading. Arrangements for transition from home, for assessment and for teaching in the outdoor area are good.
- Effective safeguarding systems meet statutory requirements and policies are scrupulously applied, with governors taking an active role in training for safer recruitment. Leaders promote equal opportunities and are assiduous in tackling any discrimination that may arise.
- The local authority has provided 'light-touch' support to this strong school by offering additional staff to check attendance as well as professional development for governors. The local authority has drawn on the skilled leadership of the executive headteacher to foster a federation in which an additional neighbouring school is led and managed by this governing body and leadership team.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The federation's governing body knows the standards of achievement and teaching in the school because the executive headteacher's regular summary reports provide clear information that is subject to challenging questions in meetings. Governors have an accurate understanding of how pupils are performing compared with national standards because they use the 'data dashboard' reports and some have received training in tracking pupils' progress in the school compared with national figures. Governors understand the link between teachers' pay progression and pupils' progress because they have revised the pay policy and receive summaries of teachers' performance from the headteacher. Checks are made that the pupil premium funds are spent on the intended groups because the headteacher reports on the impact on attainment made by the funds. Oversight of safeguarding is scrupulous and the budget is very carefully managed.

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	413281
Local authority	Islington
Inspection number	100443

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	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Forsdick
Headteacher	Ann Dwulit (Executive Headteacher) Fiona MacCorquodale (Head of School)
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 January 2009
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