

# St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

Estcourt Road, Fulham, London, SW6 7HB

**Inspection dates** 11–12 December 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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' achieve well at all key stages. The pupils make good progress and achieve standards by the end of Year 6 that are above average in English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is mostly good, with some examples of high quality teaching. Teachers' planning meets the needs of different groups of pupils and engage them well.
- Governors, senior leaders and teachers are united in their vision for the school. They are ambitious for the pupils. They know the school's strengths and areas for development very well.
- The headteacher and all leaders check the quality of teaching and learning rigorously to ensure that all teachers know their strengths and areas for development.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress because of the very specific focus on developing their early language skills through targeted interventions.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and have positive attitudes to learning. Attendance has significantly improved and is above average. Pupils say they feel safe at the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The school's marking and feedback policy is not consistently applied across the school.
- There is not enough teaching that is outstanding to enable all pupils to achieve high standards, particularly the most able.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 20 lessons, of which 10 were seen jointly with the headteacher and two deputy headteachers.
- Inspectors evaluated pupils’ work and talked to pupils about their learning and listened to them read.
- Inspectors held discussions with parents, staff, members of the senior leadership team and other leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other members, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed a range of documents, including the school’s checks on how well it is doing, the school development plan, documents relating to safeguarding, policies, information about pupils’ progress, the minutes of meetings held by the governing body, and records of behaviour and incidents. They also looked at the school’s website and data dashboard, and records of the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and additional sports funding action plan.
- Inspectors examined anonymised documents about the management of staff performance.
- Inspectors took account of the 67 responses to the online Parent View survey, as well as discussions held with parents during the inspection, school’s records of parents’ views and a letter from Ofsted. They reviewed the responses to staff questionnaires.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Inspection team

Kewal Goel, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sibani Raychoudhuri	Additional Inspector
Iqbal Gill	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Thomas of Canterbury is larger than the average-sized primary school. It has a distinctive Christian ethos, and spirituality is at the heart of the school's vision and ethos.
- Since 2011, the school has embarked on a major expansion from one-and-a-half forms of entry to two.
- The school has two classes in each year group from Reception to Year 6 and 30 full-time children in the Nursery.
- Well over 80% of the pupils come from a wide range of ethnic heritages. The largest groups are White Other (Albanian, Portuguese), Black African and Black Caribbean.
- An above average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language, although few are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, from forces families and looked after children) is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards in English and mathematics, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by sharing the good practice across the school, so that all pupils reach their full potential, particularly the most able.
- Ensure that the school's marking and feedback policy is consistently applied so that all pupils understand their next steps for learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are below those expected for their age, particularly in communication and language, personal, social and emotional development. They make good progress because of strong focus on phonics (the sounds letters make) to develop their early reading and communication skills and effective adult support. At the end of Early Years Foundation Stage their achievement is above the national expectations.
- The teaching of phonics is well planned and the national screening checks have been above the national expectations for the last two years.
- Good teaching overall enables pupils to build on the foundations laid in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress throughout their time in the school. At the end of Year 6, pupils achieve above average standards in writing and mathematics and significantly above average standards in reading. Achievement is not yet outstanding because the most able pupils do not always achieve as well as they should.
- Pupils' work and the school's assessment information show that pupils make good, and often rapid, progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well because of the early identification of their needs and quality interventions by specialist staff.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well because of very effective targeted support.
- Pupils enjoy reading and talk enthusiastically about reading in school as well as at home. They have a good understanding of higher order reading skills.
- Pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding achieve well because the school has used the funding well by employing skilled teachers who are providing quality interventions in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups. They make good progress and achieve as well as their peers in the school.
- Pupils are developing their basic skills across a range of subjects. For example, in an art lesson, pupils applied their skills in literacy and information and communication technology (ICT).
- Achievement is not yet outstanding because the standards achieved by pupils are not consistently high.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching across the school, over time, is good, with examples of some outstanding teaching. Teachers have high expectations. They have good subject knowledge and allow pupils to take risks and makes learning fun and enjoyable.
- Teachers use targeted questioning to extend pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding and knowledge. Planning is differentiated and mostly matched to the needs of all pupils. However, teaching is not yet outstanding because the most able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently to achieve their full potential.
- Teachers assess pupils' learning regularly by using mini plenaries, and adjust their planning and teaching accordingly. Marking is regular. The quality of feedback by teachers and pupils' response to the feedback are good in some classes, but they are not consistently good across the school.
- There is a high focus on developing pupils' reading, writing, mathematics and speaking and listening skills.
- The teaching of writing is highly effective. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils were free to use their imagination whilst simultaneously including the features of letter writing. They used a range of sentence starters and shared their letter beginnings. Pupils evaluated their work saying

what they found challenging and what they needed to do to improve.

- Pupils are keen to learn and participate in lessons. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils were learning to understand the concept of a tornado through a specific text. The text captured the imagination of the pupils. They were fully engaged with the text and able to question what was written to embed their own understanding. Pupils helped each other in their reading, provided guidance and support to each other, and this helped them to make accelerated progress in their reading and understanding of the text.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very good. Classrooms are attractive and provide a very positive learning environment. Pupils show high levels of interest and engagement. For example, in a Year 5 class, pupils were learning to estimate the size of an angle. All pupils were fully engaged and took ownership of their learning, giving reasons and justifications, moving ahead briskly with the activity.
- The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good because of effective planning of indoor and outdoor activities linked to all areas of learning. There is a good balance of child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities, which engage children well.
- Teaching of phonics through a range of activities is a strength that promotes children's good early reading skills. For example, in a Reception class, the teacher used rhymes and songs to learn the sounds of letters 'F' and 'f' and they learnt how to use the upper and lower case correctly.

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

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They respond promptly to teachers and other staff's instructions. This allows lessons to proceed smoothly. Pupils are engaged in lessons and motivated to do well at tasks, which usually meet their needs well.
- Pupils are very positive about their behaviour in classes. Most parents and staff in their responses confirm that behaviour in the school is good. During the inspection, behaviour observed at break times was found to be good.
- Pupils are courteous and conduct themselves well around the school. They have a positive work ethic, as shown by the volume of work in books and pupils' typically good participation in lessons.
- Pupils have a good awareness of different forms of bullying, including cyber and homophobic bullying. Pupils say bullying is rare and, if it occurs, it is dealt with promptly. The school records show that the number of bullying incidents in the school is very low.
- Pupils say they know who to go to if they have any problems and feel that the 'worry box' in classes is beneficial. They know their targets very well and are able to articulate them.
- Staff manage behaviour consistently well by using the school's procedures and policies. Pupils respond well to the school's behaviour management procedures.
- There is a very positive ethos around the school. Most parents who spoke to the inspection team were very positive about the communication and the care and support provided by the school for their children.
- Pupils take responsibility willingly. For example, they act as playground buddies and get involved in decision-making processes, such as 'worry boxes' in the classrooms. They say they have a voice in the school.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance is above average and punctuality is good.
- They say that they feel safe in the school. They understand how to keep themselves safe including e-safety. Most parents and staff say that the school ensures pupils are safe.

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

- The headteacher and all leaders have a strong sense of vision, direction and purpose for the school.

- The monitoring of teaching and learning by all leaders is rigorous. This enables all staff to identify their strengths and areas for development, so they know exactly what to do to improve.
- There is a very supportive culture within the school as senior leaders model good practice. Since the beginning of this term the school is part of the West London Teaching School alliance.
- Teachers' performance management is very closely linked to the quality of teaching, pupils' progress, appraisal and training. Teachers are given a range of support to ensure they are able to improve their practice, deliver increasingly good outcomes for pupils and meet the ambitious targets they are set, which are directly linked to salary progression.
- The school checks on how well it is doing, identifies strengths and areas for development accurately and these are based on clear evidence. The school's development plan and curriculum action plans give clear focus for improvement and leadership responsibilities.
- The analysis and tracking of progress of individual pupils are very good. This helps teachers to identify pupils who are making expected progress and others who require focused intervention.
- The curriculum is topic based and includes all the main subjects. It is strengthened by the provision in the arts and science. It develops pupils' curiosity for learning, reflection, spirituality and use of the imagination. The school offers pupils good opportunities to develop their awareness of, and respect towards, diversity and their appreciation of music, art and sports.
- The promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills and awareness is a strength of the school and helps to promote equality of opportunity very well.
- The school has used a commercial scheme to engender a love of reading, and there has been a strong focus on the Big Write, which has raised standards in writing.
- Pupil premium funding is allocated very effectively to raise achievement of eligible pupils through a range of provision. As a result, the progress made by these pupils closely matches other pupils in the school.
- The school uses the new primary sports funding to employ a full-time sports coach for all year groups. It monitors the impact by collecting information on pupils' progress in physical education, levels of participation and their involvement and enjoyment.
- The school leadership team is committed to open communications and positive relationships with parents. It listens and acts upon the views of parents, for example changing the procedures for parents' evenings.
- The local authority provides light touch support to the school, given the school's track record of performance.
- The school's safeguarding systems are robust and meet all statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are highly focused on the vision for the school. They know the school's strengths and areas for development very well and are actively engaged in monitoring the quality of teaching, and challenging and supporting the senior leadership team, for example by regular scrutiny of school targets. They understand the performance information very well and use a range of resources to ensure they know how well the school performs in relation to schools locally and nationally. There is a link governor system to challenge and support the key leaders in the school. Governors are very familiar with the school's performance management system. They are clear on how various financial resources are prioritised and their impact. They ensure that pupil premium and additional sports funding are used well. Governors attend training specific to their roles and responsibilities and ensure that statutory duties are met fully.

## 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>	100357
<b>Local authority</b>	Hammersmith and Fulham
<b>Inspection number</b>	425599

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	367
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Price
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joanne Flower
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18–19 November 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7385 8165
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