

St Dominic's Catholic Primary School

Southampton Road, Camden, London, NW5 4JS

Inspection dates 15–16 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and her team have worked diligently since the last inspection to secure high quality teaching and experiences for all pupils. Consequently, pupils' achievement is now good.
- Pupils make good progress in their literacy and numeracy skills because teachers and their assistants work well together to provide engaging activities that motivate them.
- Pupils from different groups make good progress because their experiences are positive. This includes disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, those eligible for the pupil premium and pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Middle leaders are rigorous in their planning and delivery of lessons. This results in good teaching that enables pupils to deepen their knowledge.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They feel safe and say that they enjoy coming to school.
- Parents speak highly of the school and are pleased with the way the school keeps their children safe and improves their learning.
- Governors ensure resources are allocated efficiently so that pupil premium funding has a positive impact on the achievement of the eligible pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching over time ensures pupils make good rather than outstanding progress overall.
- Most able pupils are not always provided with opportunities to challenge their higher-level writing skills.
- Occasionally, pupils are not sufficiently challenged by their work or their teachers' marking comments.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 27 lessons, four of which were joint observations with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and went out to the playground with pupils.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, school leaders, subject leaders, members of the governing body and a local authority representative.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, for them to be analysed. Inspectors took account of comments from the school's parental surveys. Members of the inspection team also spoke to parents as they brought their children to school.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including school improvement plans, information on pupils' current progress, pupils' written work, the governing body minutes and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Janev Mehmet, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Avtar Sherri

Additional Inspector

Alastair McMeckan

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is higher than the national average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be entitled to free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is higher than the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and most of them speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that:
 - teachers consistently challenge all pupils, especially the most able, through suitably demanding activities which extend their literacy and numeracy skills
 - teachers' marking is more consistent in quality
 - all pupils regularly get the chance to respond to marking of their books to improve their work.

Inspection judgement

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good overall. The school has made rapid improvement since the last inspection to ensure pupils achieve well. Most pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. Well-planned support for the development of literacy skills and for those with specific learning needs plays a key role in achieving this.
- Pupils eligible for additional funding attain higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics than their peers nationally. The good progress made by these pupils is as a result of intensive extra support in English and mathematics. Consequently, their achievement is now similar to that of their classmates in mathematics and English.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics because teaching in the past has been weak. Leaders have acted successfully to eradicate this and pupils' progress is now accelerating. By the end of Key Stage 2, the standards attained by pupils are generally in line with national levels, and above national levels in reading.
- The most able pupils generally make good progress. However, in some classes, teachers do not always provide activities that are challenging enough, particularly in higher level writing skills. This hinders the progress pupils make.
- Pupils enjoy reading and are excited about the school's new library. Older pupils listen to younger pupils read on a regular basis. This raises the profile of reading across the school.
- Children join the school with skills and knowledge that are well below the levels expected for their age. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Because starting points for this group were low, the most recent national phonics (the sounds that letters make) check at the end of Year 1 showed that pupils' reading skills were below the national average. School information on pupils' levels currently indicates that they are making rapid progress and working at levels that are higher than expected for that age group.
- The school's work to promote equality of opportunity is good because support provided by adults to individual pupils is effective. Teachers give pupils clear guidance in lessons to make sure they achieve well.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good. As a result, pupils are happy to come to school and enjoy learning. Teachers set a good example at all times through their respectful and positive attitudes towards pupils and each other. Pupils are confident and take their learning seriously.
- Pupils rapidly develop their skills in reading and writing because their teachers motivate them well. Pupils develop their skills in mathematics systematically because teachers and classroom assistants ask questions that develop their thinking skills. Although pupils generally learn in a way that develops their mathematical skills well, more able pupils are not always provided with work that is challenging enough.
- Teachers and their assistants understand how well pupils are doing because they check progress regularly to make sure individuals reach their potential. Most pupils receive high-quality feedback and guidance in their books on how to improve, and respond regularly to their teachers' questions or tasks. However, teachers' marking does not always indicate to pupils what they need to do to further improve their learning. This slows the progress of some pupils.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes learn to recognise their letters and sounds well. The teaching of language, literacy and communication skills is of high quality and ensures that children learn to sound out letters confidently. Children in the Reception class were excited when talking about and writing invitations.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite, well behaved and take responsibility around the school. In their lessons, pupils listen well to instructions and complete their work to the best of their ability. They help each other and are keen to improve.
- There are opportunities for pupils to contribute positively to their school through 'buddy' programmes. Older pupils provide reading support for the younger ones, as well as taking part in evaluating their learning in some activities. They also play a key role in showing others how to lead mass in the church that is adjacent to the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Relationships between pupils, their peers and their teachers are very positive. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that if the need arises, staff will deal with any incidents in school. They understand potential internet dangers.
- Pupils are very keen to learn and arrive promptly to lessons. Attendance is above the national average because diligent work by senior leaders maintains high expectations of pupils' punctuality and attendance.
- Parents have a positive view of the school. Since the last inspection, they have become more involved in workshops that guide the effective learning of literacy and numeracy. As a result, parents are now supporting their children's learning more confidently.

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and her leadership team have worked diligently and collaboratively to eradicate poor teaching since the last inspection. The progress made by the school is as a result of school leaders at all levels providing positive role models for all staff.
- Middle leaders are extremely effective in leading their teams and securing the best opportunities for all pupils to do well. Leaders check and develop team members' performance consistently well. They ensure teachers to reflect and develop their teaching skills.
- The detailed analysis of how well pupils are doing in their subjects provides clear, focused next steps in order to improve areas for improvement. Teaching and achievement are not outstanding because some of the most able pupils do not always reach their potential.
- Staff use information on pupils' progress well to inform their teaching. This enables most groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, those eligible for the pupil premium and pupils who speak English as an additional language, to achieve well.
- The subjects pupils learn are well organised by teachers. There is a good mix of opportunities for pupils to develop good artistic, creative and sporting skills. Pupils learn about other cultures, religions and countries. The school ensures that spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning are taught well across a range of subjects. Pupils are keen to collect money to support an Ethiopian educational charity.
- The school makes effective use of the additional sports funding by promoting physical education and pupils' health and well-being through clubs, and activities linked to sports skills. Pupils take part in athletics, tag rugby, basketball and dance. They enjoy competing with other pupils and performing their work.
- Safeguarding practices meet the statutory requirements.
- The local authority provides appropriate challenge and support for the school. It has been a 'critical friend' in moving the school on since its last inspection. It has taken part in reviews and lesson observations, as well as providing opportunities for specialist support when needed.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body supports the headteacher exceptionally well to ensure that teaching and achievement improve continually. Governors hold the school to account by working closely

with the headteacher and senior leaders. They visit the school regularly to keep up to date with developments. Governors take part in regular training either at school or on specific courses held by the local authority. They have a good understanding of the school's information on pupils' progress and how it is being used to maximise the impact of teaching. They ensure that teachers are suitably rewarded for good performance related to the quality of their teaching and pupils' achievement. Additional funding is allocated well and leads to eligible pupils making good progress in their reading, writing and mathematics skills from their starting points.

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	100039
Local authority	Camden
Inspection number	442104

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	294
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Harvey
Headteacher	Jennifer O'Prey
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 November 2012
Telephone number	020 74855918
Fax number	020 72840961
Email address	head@stdominics.camden.sch.uk

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