

# St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School

1 Pierrepoint Road, Acton, London, W3 9JR

**Inspection dates** 2–3 July 2014

<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.

- From starting points that are at or below what would be expected, all groups of pupils make good progress. Standards at the end of Year 6 are above national averages.
- Support for pupils who qualify for additional government funding is well used. These pupils make good progress as a result.
- Pupils enjoy their learning, do their best and achieve well, because teaching is good throughout the school.
- There is a consistent and very positive approach to pupils' personal and social development. Pupils behave very well and have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- Pupils display impeccable manners and show courtesy and consideration to each other and to adults.
- Ambitious and energetic leadership from all leaders, including governors, has resulted in the quality of teaching improving year-on-year. Progress made by pupils is similarly rising annually.
- Leaders rigorously analyse the school's performance and use expertise from outside the school to ensure their judgements are sound.
- Teachers and support staff are dedicated and constantly strive to make further improvements.
- Parents are very supportive of, and show great confidence in, the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some teaching does not fully engage the pupils, so they very occasionally become distracted and their progress slows.
- Children's communication skills are not well developed in the Reception class.
- Improvements in marking are still being developed. Pupils do not consistently and fully understand how to improve their work and act upon feedback.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 20 lessons, two of which were seen jointly with the headteacher.
- The routine at the start of the day was observed and inspectors spoke with a number of parents and carers bringing pupils to school.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in their books and displayed around the school and heard a sample of pupils read.
- Inspectors spoke to two groups of pupils, one of which was randomly selected by the lead inspector, about their attitudes to learning and their views of the school. They also took many informal opportunities to talk to pupils.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including improvement plans, policies, minutes of governor meetings, monitoring records and reports on the school's strengths and aspects for development. They also scrutinised evidence of the school's safeguarding procedures and data tracking the progress of pupils throughout the school.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, other school leaders, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The 56 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and one handwritten response were taken into consideration. The 34 responses to the questionnaire for school staff were also taken into account.

## Inspection team

Robert Eyre-Brook, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Clair Harrington-Wilcox

Additional Inspector

Joanne Baksh-Daswani

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St. Vincent's is a Catholic school within the Diocese of Westminster. It is much larger than the average-sized primary school. It has two classes in each year group and there is a third class currently in Year 2. The two part-time nursery classes were opened in September 2011.
- Most of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and many speak English as an additional language. Many pupils are of Polish heritage.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for particular groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals) is about average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The school offers childcare provision for its pupils through an after-school club run by Ealing Play Service. The governing body operates a breakfast club each day during term time for the school's own pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.

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

- Improve teaching, from good to outstanding, and enhance pupils' progress by:
  - ensuring all teaching is as effective as the best in holding pupils' attention and engaging their enthusiasm
  - continuing to secure the good practice in marking, so pupils consistently act upon feedback and so learn rapidly how to make their work better.
- Enable children in Reception to develop their language and communication skills, for example by encouraging and developing the quality of children's role play.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well across the school. This is because they are taught well and the school tracks their progress very carefully, intervening quickly if they fall behind.
- Many pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage, with skills, knowledge and understanding that are below those expected for their age. Good teaching, especially in the Nursery classes, ensures they make good progress. Consequently, the great majority reach a good level of development by the time they leave Reception.
- Pupils acquire skills in phonics (the link between letters and the sounds they make) rapidly, and the proportion reaching the threshold in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 is above the national average.
- Pupils learn to read quickly and rapidly develop into confident and motivated readers. The introduction of a reading and writing programme in recent years has been very effective in accelerating the progress of children in reading and writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics. This is because teaching is well matched to pupils' abilities and the school has introduced new resources which are accelerating progress.
- Pupils make good progress across Key Stage 2. Consequently, standards at the end of Year 6 are typically above national averages.
- Pupils who are supported by additional funding make good progress and achieve results that are close to those achieved by all pupils nationally. However, the standards they achieve are not as high as those of other pupils in the school and they are typically about two terms behind their peers in English and mathematics.
- Children who enter the school with little or no spoken English acquire English language skills rapidly. This is due to skilled teaching and good support from teaching assistants, a number of whom speak the children's home language. This helps these pupils, especially while they are in the early stages of learning English.
- Standards achieved by pupils currently completing Year 4 were low when they reached the end of Year 2. The school has worked hard to help these pupils catch up and many are now reaching expected levels.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well because they receive good support.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well as their progress is tracked carefully and staff intervene quickly if they encounter difficulty.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good. There is a strong focus on improving teaching and teachers speak highly of the training they receive. Pupils respond well to their teachers, commenting, 'They are really friendly. If we are stuck, they help us.'
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a wide range of well-planned activities, both indoors and outside. Relationships are very good, so children feel well supported and can learn happily.
- Teachers in the Nursery help children to develop their spoken language by encouraging them to explain their ideas and answers questions to a partner. This practice is not as well developed in Reception. For example, children playing in a 'beach shop' were unclear about what they were selling or how much they were charging customers. As a result, valuable opportunities to develop early language and number skills were being missed.
- The school has rightly focused on the teaching of writing across a wide range of subjects. Teachers are ambitious for their pupils and skilfully model the writing process for them. In one

Year 3 class, the teacher successfully challenged the pupils over their choice of words. One responded by suggesting the word 'salivating' to describe the feeling of anticipation! Another pupil commented to an inspector: 'I like writing. I am writing a film at the moment.' Pupils enjoy having regular opportunities to write at length.

- Teachers display very good subject knowledge. They provide clear explanations of the linguistic features that pupils can use in their writing. They ensure that more able pupils are challenged and that the work is pitched at a high enough level for them. The most able pupils are enabled to quickly move on to more challenging work. As a result, these pupils make good progress.
- Able pupils in their final year in the school are well provided for. In a Year 6 class, pupils made excellent use of rhetorical questions as they devised adverts as part of their work on persuasive writing. Examples included 'Are you hungry for adventure?' and 'Are you thirsty for excitement?' However, the school recognises there is still more to be done to ensure they are clear about what is required to enable the most able pupils to achieve the highest Level 6.
- Teachers make good use of technology, including computer tablets, to help pupils learn. Pupils respond to these opportunities with enthusiasm. Technology is also used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs or disabilities. The school is well prepared for the introduction of the new requirements to teach computing from September 2014.
- Teachers make good use of displays to help the pupils with their work. Pupils regularly refer to prompts, reminders and suggestions displayed on the walls to help them. Pupils find resources provided on their tables, such as vocabulary pyramids, very helpful.
- The teaching of mathematics includes a strong focus on problem solving, which helps pupils to develop and apply their skills. Pupils respond very well to this approach, which contributes to the high standards achieved in this subject.
- The school provides a good range of homework. This is well received by pupils. Increasing use is made of on-line opportunities for teachers to set work and for pupils to respond.
- Teachers mark pupils' work diligently and regularly set 'next steps' for them. Pupils are invited to respond to the teachers' feedback. This is helping pupils to improve their work. However, this practice is not consistent across the school and teachers do not always show pupils clearly what they have done well and how they can improve their work.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are consistently polite and courteous and display excellent manners. They greet visitors readily and are eager to hold doors open for them. Pupils clearly take great pride in this aspect of their behaviour.
- Pupils' behaviour is not outstanding because very occasionally pupils become distracted and do not respond quickly when their teacher needs to gain their attention. This slows their progress. Pupils spoke about occasions when the behaviour of others had interrupted their learning.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Safeguarding procedures are robust and all members of staff receive regular training. Pupils consistently report that they feel safe. They understand how to stay safe on-line and speak knowledgeably about this. They actively campaign on matters of safety, including encouraging drivers to drive at no more than 20 miles per hour on the road outside the school.
- Behaviour logs, maintained by the school, show that incidents of poor behaviour continue to reduce. This is because systems to support good behaviour are well thought through and members of staff are vigilant in their monitoring.
- Pupils say with confidence that bullying does not take place. They show a good understanding of the different forms that bullying can take. They are confident that members of staff would deal robustly with any incidents that might occur. 'Worry boxes' are placed in each classroom and a 'Friendship Bench' on the playground and these help ensure pupils are not anxious or isolated.
- Attendance is higher than the national average. Strenuous steps have been taken to ensure pupils are able to attend regularly and arrive at school on time. These have been very

successful. The introduction of a 'soft start', where pupils can come in to class early and settle to activities has been very helpful in this respect.

- Pupils are reflective and thoughtful. The use of planting from the Holy Land as part of the school's 'super grounds' is clearly very meaningful for the pupils. Those with special educational needs and disabilities are well supported to consider spiritual insights.
- Pupils' social, moral and cultural development is promoted very well. Pupils from different backgrounds play together harmoniously. If disagreements do break out, pupils attempt to solve the problem and are helped to do so by members of the School Council. They take their responsibilities to each other very seriously. The school highly values and celebrates the diverse cultural backgrounds of the pupils.
- Pupils are very aware of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. They raise money for the work of the 'Free the Children' charity in Haiti. A day that Year 6 pupils spend 'living' in a cardboard box on the playground, raising money for homeless people, heightens their awareness of the needs of others.
- Exclusions are rare and there have been none this academic year. Neither have there been any racist incidents.

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

- Leadership and management are good. Senior leaders are ambitious for their school and have driven a successful programme of school improvement in recent years. They challenge themselves to seek opportunities for their work to be accredited by outside bodies, using this as a spur to further improvement. Consequently, the school has won an impressive array of awards and has a very good reputation in the community.
  - Senior leaders rigorously evaluate the impact of their work. They bring in outside experts, alongside governors, to review the progress the school is making. There is a very strong culture of school improvement. The headteacher is skilled at identifying aspects that need improving and taking swift action. As a result, the school has ample capacity to improve still further.
  - The school makes good use of the pupil premium to help pupils supported by this additional funding. This has funded the employment of a learning mentor to help pupils encountering a range of difficulties. It has provided support for individuals and groups of pupils and enabled the school to run 'booster groups' outside the school day. This had had a notable impact on the progress of these pupils. Though their attainment is still below that of their peers, they are making increasingly rapid progress throughout the school.
  - The primary schools' sports grant is well used to ensure pupils can take part in a very wide range of sporting activities. Specialist coaching ensures skills are developed very effectively. Pupils have ample opportunities to play competitive sport and are helped to lead active and healthy lives.
  - Middle leaders, many of whom are relatively new to their responsibilities, have benefited from high quality support. Their use of pupil progress information to plan improvements in their areas of responsibility is more effective as a result.
  - The staff team is very cohesive and all are very keen to continue to build their skills. They are overwhelmingly positive about the school. A number of the newer teachers trained with the school and several of the school's leaders gained promotion from within. The school plans well to ensure talent is nurtured and pupils receive good teaching.
  - Pupils enjoy a wide range of learning opportunities across the full range of primary subjects. There are many opportunities to develop their creativity and the school ensures that meaningful links are made between different subjects.
  - Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. One commented that it provided 'a very good standard of education and pastoral care'. Another commented: 'There has never has one day when I have had to coax my child to come into school.' The response to the online Parent View survey was overwhelmingly positive, as were parents who spoke to inspectors.
- **The governance of the school:**

- Governors bring a wide range of skills to the school. Among the governors are headteachers, surveyors and individuals with expertise in finance and personnel. Governors are keen to develop professionally and attend regular training.
- Governors are closely involved with the school and visit the school regularly. They are aware of any groups of pupils who may be underperforming and track their progress carefully. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and challenge leaders effectively as a result. They understand how the school's performance compares to those of other schools nationally.
- Governors manage the performance of the headteacher very effectively. They ensure the school's systems for the performance management of staff are robust and that the performance of teachers is reflected in decisions about their pay progression.
- The governing body ensures that legal requirements are met, including those for safeguarding.

## 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>	101926
<b>Local authority</b>	Ealing
<b>Inspection number</b>	439503

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>	499
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sean Currie
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christina Cleugh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 May 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8992 6625
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