

# Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School

Whitman Road, London, E3 4RB

**Inspection dates** 8–9 July 2014

|                                |                      |                      |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Requires improvement | 3        |
|                                | 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' progress in all years is good. Year 6 reach above average standards in mathematics and even higher standards in reading, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Teaching is good and pupils understand what they are learning about and frequently check that they are on track to reach their targets.
- Pupils who receive additional funding, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress. Adults know them individually and provide flexible, good quality support.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they enjoy coming to school. Pupils feel safe in school and any worries or concerns are dealt with quickly.
- Extensive sporting and musical events enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The school leadership has successfully focused on improving the school. As a close knit team, leaders have tackled underperformance and strengthened teaching in every class.
- Governors both support and challenge the school, holding school leaders sharply to account for all aspects of their work.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teachers do not always check that pupils have read and responded to their written comments about how to improve further.
- Younger pupils do not always fully understand the meaning of what they read.
- Some teachers provide more stimulating opportunities for pupils to write than others.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' writing in Years 3 and 4 are not as high as in Years 5 and 6.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons, six jointly with school leaders. Inspectors also observed support sessions for pupils who need extra help with their learning.
- They met with a group of pupils and spoke too many more informally throughout the inspection, gathering their views and experiences of life in the school.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and looked closely at how the school encourages and promotes a love of reading.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and a Tower Hamlets Local Authority School improvement Adviser.
- Inspectors also met with subject leaders and talked to and met with staff responsible for checking attendance and behaviour, and coordinating special educational needs.
- There were too few responses to the online Parent View survey for evidence from this to be taken into account. However, inspectors spoke to parents and carers bringing their children to school and looked at the school's own parent questionnaires.
- Inspectors analysed the 18 responses to the staff questionnaire completed during the inspection and also paid a visit to the breakfast club.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including information on pupils' current progress, planning documents, checks carried out by leaders on the school's effectiveness, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Aune Turkson-Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fatiha Maitland

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Guardian Angels is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school with one class in each year group.
- The majority of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, with a quarter being of Black African, Black Caribbean or other Black heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have 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 the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding provided for pupils who are looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is above the national average.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club which is managed by the governing body.
- 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?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding and raise achievement even further by making sure that:
  - teachers always give pupils enough time to respond to the written comments on their work and check that pupils have acted on the advice
  - the teaching of reading for younger pupils places suitable emphasis on developing comprehension skills as well as technical accuracy
  - teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' writing are equally high in all Key Stage 2 classes and that teachers consistently provide activities which stimulate pupils' desire to write.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children join the Reception class with skills and abilities at levels below those typically seen at their age. They quickly adapt to routines and settle into the stimulating environment. Adults encourage them to make their own choices and they soon grow in confidence.
- Progress is good through each phase of the school and by the end of Year 6 pupils reach standards which are above average in all subjects, with particular strengths in reading and writing.
- In 2013, the attainment of pupils in Year 6 for whom the school receives the pupil premium was in line with their peers' in school in reading and behind in mathematics and writing by a little over two terms. Equivalent pupils currently in the school achieve well and gaps in attainment are closing quickly. They are currently half a term ahead in reading, in line in writing and a term behind in mathematics. Gaps are closing because the extra funding is used effectively to provide homework support, additional reading help and specialist staff to support pupils academically and work more closely with their families.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has improved and is well taught in the Reception class. Pupils in Year 1 achieved results well above national averages in the annual screening check in phonics in 2013, a significant improvement compared with results in 2012. Although technically competent as early readers, pupils do not always have a deep enough understanding of the underlying meaning.
- Pupils' standards in reading in Key Stage 1 have risen to slightly above average and the promotion and enjoyment of reading across the school are strong. The school library plays an important role, is well stocked and every class spends time there. Many more pupils now visit the library, borrow books and read regularly in school and at home.
- Writing standards are rising this year and traditionally have been higher in Key Stage 2. In the very best examples pupils are given many interesting and stimulating things to write about. As a result they write with accuracy and for a range of purposes, with good levels of competence and confidence. This is not yet widespread across the school and an area the school has identified for improvement.
- In mathematics, pupils are encouraged to discuss their work and by the time they reach Year 6 are adept in using mathematical vocabulary to explain their solutions. Pupils are confident mathematicians and several have reached Level 6 this year, showing a rise in achievement.
- Additional sports funding is used well, and the school has appointed its own sports specialist to raise expertise among the staff and offer a wider range of sports, activities and access to competitions.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive support tailored to their individual needs and achieve well as a result. The achievement of pupils from minority ethnic groups is good. Those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress because the school pinpoints their language needs early on and provides effective support.
- The school knows who the most able pupils are and has ensured that they receive work which stretches and challenges them. More pupils are now reaching the higher National Curriculum levels.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Teachers and teaching assistants have developed positive relationships with pupils and this has helped to create a purposeful and enjoyable atmosphere in lessons. Adults plan together and make sure that activities are demanding enough for all abilities.
- Teaching assistants have improved their skills and many deliver one-to-one and small-group sessions at a high level, so that gaps in pupils' learning are quickly addressed.
- School monitoring shows that teaching has improved since the previous inspection and this is confirmed by the rise in pupils' progress.
- Teachers typically explain clearly what pupils will be learning and set specific targets. Pupils have established the routine of checking their own work to see that it meets those targets. As a result pupils make good progress and have a good sense of how to improve.
- Teachers typically question skilfully to check and deepen understanding and use responses to reshape tasks, so that any gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are filled during the lesson.
- The pace of lessons is typically and suitably swift and pupils are happy to show how many books they have filled with the volume of work they have covered which is neatly presented and of good quality.
- Pupils reach for resources such as dictionaries themselves before asking an adult for help. Pupils in a Year 3 literacy lesson turned to the colourful stick-on notes to give their 'top tips' when reviewing their writing.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers show their high expectations of what pupils can do. However, school monitoring shows variation in pupils' writing achievements in Key Stage 2, where standards and presentation are higher in Years 5 and 6 than in Years 3 and 4.
- Teachers mark work regularly and offer 'how to improve' comments which pupils are beginning to respond to in blue pen. This system is not yet fully established across the school and teachers do not always check that pupils have read and responded to their comments.
- Homework is set weekly and is appropriately linked to pupils' learning. For those who find it difficult to complete work at home, the school support worker runs a homework club where parents and carers are also welcomed.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and generally behave well in lessons and around the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in school and on the roads outside. Pupils understand how important it is to use the internet with care and that they must never give out personal information to strangers.
- Parents, carers and staff agree that pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is good. Pupils' attendance levels have risen and are above national averages. School leaders, supported by the home-school support worker have maintained a high profile on attendance and formed close links with families who have difficulties in this area.
- Pupils with worries or concerns know that they can place a note in one of the 'Talk boxes' in their class or outside the headteacher's office and their concerns will be quickly and sensitively handled. Pupils find this reassuring, and this helps them to feel more settled at school and engage with their learning.
- Pupils understand the behaviour policy and are clear about the code of conduct; one commented, 'The school is for learning and we are ready to learn'.
- Bullying is rare, and pupils know that it is quickly dealt with by adults in the school. There are very few racist incidents, and discrimination in any form is not tolerated.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and particularly their extensive, sporting achievements and the trophies displayed in cabinets. Pupils train as sports leaders and the school monitors both how behaviour is improved by involvement with sports and actual levels reached. The playground is kept litter free, and an additional grassed area is highly valued for communal play and games activities. Pupils are friendly and show a high regard for each other in the school and this helps those who join the school late to settle in and feel welcome. Pupils speak positively about how much they enjoy and value being a part of the school, and this is reflected in their good manners and smart appearance and the wearing of the school tie.

**The leadership and management are good**

- School leaders and governors share a common ambition to provide the best for all pupils so that they leave the school with high standards of achievement, having made good progress through the school.
- High-quality teaching is at the heart of this vision and leaders have not been afraid to tackle and to move on less effective staff. They provide support and coaching and frequently model best practice, stepping back into the classroom to teach.
- Improved training for support staff has equipped them with additional skills to lead and deliver booster sessions and this has had a positive impact on raising achievement in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- The school reviews the impact of its work thoroughly and has an honest and realistic view of how well things are improving and what must be done next. The development plan is realistic and focused on improving pupils' progress and raising standards with a good understanding of which aspects of teaching could be improved.
- Improvements in teaching and the good progress now evident across all years and for groups in the school show that the leadership and management of teaching is secure and that the school is in a good position to improve further.
- Pupils' learning is greatly enhanced by the extensive range of sporting activities and opportunities to take part in a variety of instrumental classes including flute, guitar, recorder and African drums. They can also sing in the choir at lunchtime.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development particularly well and makes sure that every pupil has access to all that the school has to offer.
- Parents, carers and staff express their positive support and praise for school leaders at Guardian

Angels on its journey as an improving school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is strong and effective. Governors bring a range of skills, which include educational and financial expertise. The Chair of the Governing Body meets weekly with the headteacher and checks that achievement and the quality of teaching remain at the forefront of improvements. Governors understand school performance data and use the latest available figures to compare performance with that of other schools.
- Governors work closely with school leaders, the local authority and church diocese to ensure that suitable support and training are in place and that the school continues to improve.
- Governors oversee the management of school finances and ask how pupil premium and sports funding are having an impact on pupils' achievements. They see that targets to improve staff performance are carefully reviewed and that teachers' pay is linked to pupils' achievements. They have a visible presence in the school, check that the breakfast club is running smoothly and that safeguarding meets 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

|                                |               |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 100945        |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Tower Hamlets |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 442113        |

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>                 | 4–11                                     |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                    |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 205                                      |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                       |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Paul Nottage                             |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Elizabeth Worrell-Jude                   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 10 October 2012                          |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 020 8980 3939                            |
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