

Our Lady and St John's RC Primary School

Our Lady and St John's RC Primary School, Boston Park Road, Brentford, Middlesex, TW8 9JF

Inspection dates 21–22 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Select	2
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- School leaders have ensured that the school's effectiveness has remained good. Pupils achieve above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics over time.
- The numbers of pupils securing the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 6 have risen recently and are above average. This is good achievement.
- Pupils make good progress as a result of effective teaching in Years 1 to 6. Teachers and teaching assistants plan well together. As a result, pupils in need of extra help receive the best attention and support so they too make good progress.
- The school provides a good range of activities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness successfully. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils behave well in and around school. They are polite, friendly and respectful to adults and to each other. They say it is a safe and caring place and are able to recognise any potential dangers outside of school.
- The new headteacher and the governors are united in their clear vision for moving the school forward and consequently the school is well placed to improve even further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- The early years provision requires improvement. Weaknesses in assessing children's understanding and level of ability means activities are not always matched to their learning needs.
- Middle and subject leaders do not always check up on pupils' learning closely enough. As a result some pupils are not always moved on to more demanding work quickly enough.
- Teaching does not always ensure that pupils follow their teachers' advice after their work is marked. Pupils are not always taught how to further improve the quality of their writing.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed learning and looked at pupils' work, including some from the previous academic year. Inspectors observed 20 parts of lessons and visited many subjects across the school. Ten parts of lessons were observed jointly with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. Inspectors also discussed the school's evaluation of the quality of teaching and visited an assembly.
- Inspectors held meetings with pupils and listened to them read. Pupils' behaviour was observed in lessons and at recreational times.
- Inspectors looked at documentation including policies relating to safeguarding and behaviour, and the school's improvement plans. They looked at attendance figures, records of behaviour incidents, and at the school's website.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, to discuss the progress that groups of pupils make throughout the school. They analysed the school's information on attainment and progress. An inspector met with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other members of the governing body.
- The inspection team examined records of the local authority's involvement with the school and met with a local authority representative.
- Inspectors considered parents' and carers' views of the school through informal discussions before school. They also considered the 37 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire. Inspectors took into account the views of the 20 staff who completed the staff questionnaire. The team also talked to staff during the inspection.

Inspection team

Lesley Leak, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Bax

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school with one form of entry.
- The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is well above the national average, but very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Approximately one third of the school's population are Polish speakers.
- Very few pupils are supported through the pupil premium. This additional government funding is for children who are looked after by the local authority or who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is lower than the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The children in the early years provision attend full time.
- The school meets the government's floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There has been a high level of staff turnover during the last academic year. Approximately half of the current class teachers took up their appointments in September 2014. The new headteacher joined the school in September 2014, following the retirement of the previous headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to further increase the rate of pupils' progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers' marking and guidance are consistently followed up by pupils to aid their learning
 - all pupils learn how to produce even higher quality written work
 - middle and subject leaders check up on the progress pupils make in every class to support those who are ready for more challenging work, especially in writing, across the school.
- Improve the quality of early years provision by:
 - making sure that the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is recorded accurately and monitored thoroughly
 - ensuring that children have access to activities which are designed to develop a wide range of aspects of learning in Nursery and Reception classes
 - giving children in Reception more opportunities to use a wider range of outdoor resources
 - making full use of local authority support to help improve provision quickly.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school's accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses has ensured that pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics has remained good. Many of the school's procedures and systems are being refined and strengthened by the new headteacher. For example, the management of teachers' performance is now linked more closely to salary progression, and support staff benefit from appraisal. This shows good capacity for the school to improve further.
- The headteacher has rightly identified that early years provision requires improvement because assessments of what children can do lack sufficient rigour. This has led to planning which is not always pitched at the right level for children of different abilities.
- The headteacher's work to increase the effectiveness of the school's middle leadership teams is starting to have an impact. Some subject leaders are not yet confident about how best to support other teachers to improve. As the school is currently deciding its preferred approach to assessment, there are some inconsistencies in systems to check pupils' progress accurately. Middle leaders do not always check closely enough to gauge pupils' progress or whether class teachers act on the advice they are given.
- New staff, including teachers who are newly qualified, benefit from good induction arrangements and training and are well supported in their new roles.
- Good provision for the development of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development contributes to pupils' good behaviour. Staff keep a close eye on any dips in attendance or pupils' behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to celebrate the diversity of different cultures and faiths and time is made for reflection and prayer.
- The subjects taught in Years 1 to 6 meet most pupils' needs and interests. The school offers a variety of enrichment activities such as playing cello, golf and tennis. Since the last inspection, the school has successfully identified where further development was needed, such as in writing and reading for the most able pupils across the school. This has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement in English. The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The school has effective arrangements for spending the primary school sports funding to improve and widen sporting opportunities on offer. The funding has been used to provide more equipment so pupils can take part in a wider range of sports activities, including after-school clubs. It is also used to improve teachers' expertise through training. Leaders monitor the impact of this spending and can demonstrate its success.
- The school engages well with parents and carers. Parents and carers like the reading and mathematics workshops provided by the school which help them to support their children at home.
- The local authority has provided light touch support for the school.

The governance of the school:

- Members of the governing body have worked effectively to improve the impact of their support to the school. They recently conducted a review of their performance and acted decisively on the outcomes. A number of new governors have recently joined the governing body to strengthen its performance. Governors visit the school regularly to see for themselves how well it is doing. Governors make sure that the system for managing the performance of staff is effective and ensure that the quality of teaching is linked closely to pay for teachers and senior leaders. Governors know how well the school performs in comparison to others nationally and locally. They pay close attention to the school's pupil performance information. They are aware of the main strengths of the school and know where improvements are required. The governing body carefully monitors how the sports funding grant and the pupil premium funding are allocated. Governors are pleased that the gaps in attainment between the very few pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding and the others have begun to narrow across the school. They hold the headteacher to account for the school's performance and the management of its finances which are sound and linked to the school's educational priorities. They have had relevant training to raise their awareness of national guidance relating to teachers' performance. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. It seeks parents' and carers' views on important issues. Governors check that the school actively prepares its pupils for life in modern Britain.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are well behaved in classrooms and around the school. The views of staff, parents and carers confirm the inspectors' views that the behaviour observed was typical for the school.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes and approach their learning with enthusiasm. They take care over their work, and books are presented in a neat and tidy manner. Pupils show good manners and relationships across the school are strong.
- The strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum prepares pupils, from a range of cultures, well for life in modern Britain. As a result, the school is a harmonious and happy community with pupils valuing each other's beliefs and ideas.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as being the head boy or girl, a librarian, sports leader or playground buddy. They successfully organise many fund raising events to raise money for charities.
- Pupils enjoy school and consequently their attendance is above average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel happy, safe and very well cared for at school. They are aware of who they can talk to, should the need arise. They are well aware of what constitutes bullying, such as cyber bullying and name calling. They say that bullying rarely happens but if it does they are confident that the school will deal with it swiftly.
- Behaviour and safety are not yet outstanding because sometimes pupils lose focus in lessons, especially when teaching is less motivating or engaging.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good in Years 1 to 6. Pupils learn in a welcoming and attractive environment which promotes good relationships. Pupils take pride in the presentation of their work which is well displayed throughout the school. They say that their school is 'smart, fun and ambitious'.
- The most able pupils are well supported to achieve high standards because they are usually given difficult tasks which are matched to their ability.
- Written work in a range of subjects is well presented. The standard of work in books, alongside pupils' improving rates of progress, shows that most pupils achieve well over time.
- Consistently good teaching has brought about accelerated achievement in mathematics over the past three years. Better use of pupil progress information in mathematics means that teachers plan learning activities that successfully build on pupils' understanding from the previous lesson. As a result, many pupils are appropriately challenged to make rapid gains in their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils' reading is steadily improving because staff ensure that most pupils read regularly and often, both at school and at home. They have good strategies for tackling any 'hard' words and know how to look up their meanings in dictionaries.
- The quality of pupils' writing is good because they are now proficient at writing at length, for different purposes and, across a range of subjects. However, pupils are not always challenged to further improve the quality of what they write. This results in their progress being good rather than outstanding.
- Adults who support pupils in need of additional help, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, play a significant part in pupils' successful learning. This is because they are well briefed to support selected pupils.
- There are some examples of good practice in marking. However, teachers and other adults are not always rigorous enough in following up when they have asked pupils to make improvements. As a result, pupils do not always correct their mistakes or check they are not repeating errors. Sometimes, they are not given more demanding work to extend their learning.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards in mathematics, reading and writing are higher than the national average at Key Stage 1.
- The school's highly structured approach to developing reading through phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is having a strong impact on pupils' reading, which is good across the school. Pupils reached well above average reading levels in the phonics check for six year olds in 2013 and 2014.
- At Key Stage 2, standards in mathematics have remained high for two years.
- After a decline in standards in reading at Key Stage 2 in 2013, standards rose in 2014, ensuring that Year 6 pupils left with attainment in reading which was above that seen nationally.
- Pupils' attainment in writing by the time they leave is improving year on year and is above average. Pupils generally make good progress in writing, but they are not always pushed to demonstrate their creativity in writing extended texts.
- The proportion of the most able pupils achieving at the highest levels in all three subjects, and reading, writing and mathematics combined, was higher than that seen nationally in 2014. This is a marked rise compared with the previous two years. A small number of Year 6 pupils again secured standards that were well above average in mathematics in 2014. This is particularly good achievement.
- The school actively promotes equal opportunities and successfully tackles discrimination. It ensures that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and pupils who speak English as an additional language (including Polish speakers) make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their different starting points.
- The additional funding is used well to provide the best help for the very few pupils needing support with their learning. Leaders assess these pupils' progress and needs effectively. This ensures that the small number of eligible pupils across the school make at least similar progress to others in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills develop well because they have many opportunities to discuss their ideas. As a result, all pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, are confident speakers of English.
- Achievement is not yet outstanding because pupils in some classes are not yet making as rapid gains in their writing as they are in reading and mathematics.

The early years provision requires improvement

- The early years provision requires improvement. The school's checks on children's early development from when they start in Nursery and in Reception are not reliable. This limits the progress children make because activities are not planned well enough to extend their learning.
- Although the outdoor provision for nursery children has been improved since the previous inspection, plans to improve the outdoor area for children in Reception are not yet completed. Currently, there are too few opportunities for children in Reception to share the exciting range of outdoor activities enjoyed by children in the Nursery.
- The quality of teaching requires improvement. Staff do not consistently ensure that children are presented with activities that they find stimulating enough to hold their attention.
- The new headteacher is introducing key improvements to the way the early years provision is led and managed in order to raise children's achievement. Recent changes to the indoor provision are well selected to help all children make better progress. The new headteacher has sought additional support and training for staff. This is already having a positive impact on the quality of adult-led sessions. A new system to record checks on children's progress has been introduced but it is too early to evaluate its impact on raising achievement.
- Children feel safe at this early stage of the year and have already settled into classroom routines. Staff have clear expectations of behaviour, which children meet. Children are polite and respectful to each other and the adults who work with them.
- The teaching of phonics is effective in ensuring that pupils get off to a good start in learning to read.

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	102526
Local authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	444262

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	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Gerard Quinn
Headteacher	Mrs Colette Acres
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 November 2009
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