

St Elizabeth Catholic Primary School

Bonner Road, London, E2 9JY

Inspection dates

27–28 January 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Leaders and managers have not ensured that teaching is typically good since the last inspection. They have not raised pupils' achievement.
- Progress in mathematics and writing is too slow. As a result, attainment at the end of Year 2 has not risen quickly enough and has remained the same at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' writing and mathematical skills are not fully developed as they do not always practise using them in all subjects.
- Teachers do not always mark pupils' work; therefore, pupils are not always clear how to improve it. This inhibits pupils' progress. At times teaching assistants are not organised effectively to support pupils' learning.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' written work in mathematics and as result; pupils' presentation is not good enough.
- There are gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and their peers in all year groups. Sometimes, work for the most able is not challenging enough and they find the work too easy. This restricts their progress in learning.
- Middle leaders are very new to their positions. They are at the very early stages of understanding their roles and responsibilities. Therefore, it is too soon to see the impact of their work in raising standards.
- The arrangements for checking pupils' work lack rigour. As a result, some pupils' work goes unmarked and this hinders their progress.
- Leaders do not always analyse the impact of actions taken to close the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The proportion of pupils making good progress in reading at the end of Key Stage 2 is improving.
- Attainment in spelling, grammar and punctuation are significantly above average at the end of Year 6.
- Leaders are effective in ensuring that pupils are kept safe at all times.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. This is seen through pupils' good behaviour throughout the school.
- Children in the early years are happy, settled and make good progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 parts of lessons, six of them jointly with the headteacher and deputy.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school improvement plans, the governing body minutes, records of pupils' progress, and the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read. They looked at a range of pupils' work in books in every year group. They observed pupils' behaviour at break and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with key staff, groups of pupils, five governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 52 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They spoke to parents at the start of the school day. They also looked at the 36 responses from the staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Sharona Semlali, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jan Edwards	Additional Inspector
John Mason	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The early years provision is made up of a part-time morning and afternoon Nursery and two full-time Reception classes.
- Around two in every three pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is above average. The three largest groups are from White British and Any Other White or African background.
- Just under one in five pupils speak English as an additional language. This is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is slightly lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is above average. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those who are known to be eligible for free school meals or children who are looked after.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection, there has been a change in leadership and in the teaching staff. The previous headteacher resigned at the end of May 2013. An executive headteacher was in place from May 2013 until the end of the summer term 2013 for three days a week.
- The current headteacher started at the beginning of July 2013 as Head of School. She was appointed as substantive headteacher in March 2014. The deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2014. The middle leader positions were in place at the end of January 2015.
- The school manages its own breakfast and after-school clubs.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the quality of teaching is typically good or better by ensuring that all teachers:
 - check and mark pupils' work and show them what they need to do to improve
 - give pupils enough time to respond to any advice by correcting errors or practising skills
 - organise teaching assistants so that the support they give to pupils' learning in lessons is effective
 - set work at the right level of difficulty for the most-able pupils, so they make rapid progress and achieve the standards they are capable of reaching
 - ensure pupils, particularly the most able, are clear about what to do next after completing an activity.
- Raise achievement, particularly in writing and mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - attainment and progress gaps close quickly between disadvantaged pupils and their peers in school and other pupils nationally
 - pupils make consistently good or better progress in all year groups and in all subjects
 - pupils practise their mathematical and writing skills in all subjects
 - pupils develop a better and secure understanding of the different ways that they can check their work
 - pupils' presentation of their final piece of written work is of the highest quality.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders check pupils' work thoroughly
 - ensuring that middle leaders are given professional support to fully understand and deliver their responsibilities in helping to drive up standards and raise pupils' achievement
 - making sure that leaders analyse any actions taken to close the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management **require improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement has not improved rapidly enough since the last inspection.
- The recently formed leadership team are committed to working together to tackle weaknesses and make necessary improvements for the school.
- Senior leaders make frequent checks on the quality of teaching and learning. However, systems for checking pupils' work lack rigour. Too many pieces of pupils' work are not checked or marked by teachers.
- Where teaching requires improvement, extra support is given such as coaching and team teaching. Other recent initiatives include teachers having the opportunity to observe good and outstanding practitioners in other settings. All of this is beginning to improve the quality of teaching.
- Newly qualified teachers are well supported and feel they have a 'voice' in the school.
- Senior leaders have improved the way they gather and use information about pupils' achievement. This is helping them to track pupils' progress more closely so that they can provide extra support where it is needed. All of this helps to promote equality of opportunity and ensure that there is no discrimination. However, leaders do not always analyse the success of measures taken to close the gap between disadvantaged and other pupils.
- Middle leaders are new to their positions. They are still at the very early stages of understanding their roles and responsibilities. Therefore, it is too soon to see what effect they are having on raising standards.
- Pupils learn about their local area and its history through visits, for example to the local markets and the Tower of London. However, pupils are not practising their mathematics and writing skills in different subjects. This limits their progress in using and applying their knowledge and skills in a variety of situations.
- The curriculum is effectively helping to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are given time regularly for reflection; they have a good understanding of right and wrong, and they visit different places of worship. All of this ensures that pupils are prepared, for life in modern Britain.
- The school uses the sports funding well. It has helped to provide a range of sporting activities. For example, more pupils in Year 2 have the opportunity to play hockey and effective teaching ensures that they find it exciting. The proportion of pupils that take part in competitive sport has also increased for both boys and girls. The school does not tolerate any form of discrimination.
- The local authority provides good support which has helped to ensure that the school's new leadership are improving the quality of teaching.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has significantly improved since the previous inspection. Governors have undertaken a skills audit which helps to determine their roles and responsibilities on the different committees. They have had a large amount of training and have gained a better understanding about the different forms of data. They no longer just accept the information given to them by the school but will ask challenging questions. They visit the school regularly and hold a governor surgery twice a month to get the views from parents and pupils. This is helping to foster good relationships between them. Governors have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, including the quality of teaching in each year group. They are well informed on how the school is tackling any weaknesses in teaching and how it rewards any good teaching. Governors know how the pupil premium is spent and know that there are gaps between those entitled to the funding and the others in the school. However, checks on the difference the funding is making to pupils are not sufficiently rigorous.

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

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have positive attitudes and are keen to learn.
- Pupils are friendly and show a large amount of respect towards each other and to all adults. They are polite and welcoming to visitors. Pupils move around school in a sensible and orderly manner. This creates

a calm and embracing atmosphere in the school and fosters good relationships.

- Pupils take great pride in the school environment. It is free from litter. There are no coats on the floor as they are neatly packed away in the cloakrooms. However, this is not reflected in their books as their presentation of work is sometimes untidy.
- Pupils are keen and have a positive attitude to learning. In class, pupils work well with each other. They discuss and share their ideas in a mature way.
- The school council members are very committed to their roles. They were responsible for getting new nets for football. Council members are currently in negotiation with senior leaders about making changes at break and lunch times. They recognise similarities in what they are doing and the democratic process in the Houses of Parliament.
- Pupils, parents and the majority of staff say that behaviour is good. The inspection findings support their views. The school manages any challenging behaviour well.
- Attendance is broadly average and is fairly stable.
- At breakfast club, staff interact well with pupils and parents. It fulfils good care and meets the needs of all its pupils before they start the school day. This helps to give them a settled start to the day.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. School records show that child protection training for staff is up to date. Risk assessments are regularly kept up to date. All of this contributes in helping pupils to keep and feel safe.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors say they feel safe. They have a good understanding of the meaning of bullying and of the different forms it takes. They say that there is a small amount of bullying, but feel that all incidents are dealt with well. They have a good understanding of how to protect themselves when using the internet. Pupils are taught how to deal with bullying well through the curriculum and assemblies.
- Responses by pupils, staff and parent questionnaire state that the school works to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Inspectors agree that pupils and children in the early years know how to keep themselves safe within and beyond the school environment.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, it has not enabled pupils to make good enough progress. As a result, pupils are not achieving as well as they should.
- Teachers do not always mark and check pupils' work. This inhibits progress because pupils do not always know how well they are doing. Pupils do not always have clear guidance as to how they can improve their learning. They are not always given enough time to respond and act on the advice given from work that is marked.
- Even though spellings, grammar and punctuation are taught well throughout the school, pupils do not practise using these skills in other subjects. Recently, teachers have started to encourage pupils to write for a real purpose, for example by getting them to write 'blogs' on the school's website about the topics that they are learning about. Most of the older pupils use joined handwriting. However, this is not used to best effect as the presentation in their books is often untidy with too many pieces of unfinished work.
- At the end of Year 6, pupils make more progress in reading when compared to writing and mathematics. Pupils say this is because they enjoy reading and read regularly both at home and in school. They use a range of strategies to help them to read new words effectively. This is because reading is taught well, particularly in the early years.
- The teaching of mathematics varies throughout the school. Progress in mathematics often slows because teaching does not ensure that pupils have secure strategies for checking their own work. Also, pupils' use and application of their mathematical skills in other subjects are limited.
- In some classes, teaching assistants work well in providing extra support for those who need the additional help. However, sometimes, teachers do not organise how this support can best help pupils' learning.
- Pupils' thinking and discussion are promoted well. For example, well-focused questions helped Year 6 pupils to quickly recognise and understand the meanings of a rhetorical question, personification, metaphor and similes.
- Teachers create a good working atmosphere in the classrooms that encourages pupils to work and learn together well.

The achievement of pupils**requires improvement**

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils are not making good enough progress over time, particularly in writing and mathematics. This is true for all year groups and all subjects. School leaders are addressing this and work in pupils' books shows that progress is starting to improve as a result.
- In 2014, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 declined. It was broadly average in reading and mathematics and below in writing. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in reading was still average but below in both writing and mathematics.
- There are too many gaps between the disadvantaged pupils and the others in the school in every year group in reading, writing and mathematics. However, these gaps are closing. In the 2014 national tests, the disadvantaged pupils were just under a year behind the other pupils nationally in mathematics, just over two terms behind in writing and over half a term in writing.
- The gaps were not as wide in reading and writing when the results of the disadvantaged pupils are compared to the others in the school. In reading, the disadvantaged pupils were less than half a term behind the others in the school. They were a year behind in mathematics and over a term behind in writing.
- The most able pupils do not always make as much progress as they should. Sometimes, they complete their tasks more quickly than anticipated because work is too easy for them. Slightly more pupils than previously achieved a Level 3 in writing, whereas the proportion getting a Level 3 in reading and mathematics fell.
- In the 2014 national tests, the number of pupils reaching Level 5 in reading and mathematics increased; however, fewer of the most able pupils achieved a Level 5 in writing. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make at least expected progress from their starting points. This is because their complex needs are picked up at an early stage and the school works closely with families to provide the right support. Some teaching assistants are trained to give these pupils specialist help. School leaders also utilise the support of external agencies well.
- Pupils from minority backgrounds make similar progress to others in the school in all subjects.
- Attainment in the spelling, punctuation and grammar test was significantly above the national average in 2014. These basic skills in writing are taught well. This has had a positive impact on those pupils who speak English as an additional language, because it helps them to understand the basic structures of the English language. This is why they have higher levels of attainment at the end of Year 6 in all subjects when compared to their peers.

The early years provision**is good**

- All areas in the early years provision are bright and vibrant. The resources are well organised. As a result, children are excited and happy to learn. The routines are well established and they are very settled. There is a strong emphasis in getting children to show good manners and sharing. Children respond well. They are very polite and behaviour is good. They cooperate well during free-choice activities and they show a good deal of respect towards each other and to all staff.
- Teaching is consistently good. This enables children to make good progress and the majority of them start Year 1 as confident learners. Teachers in the early years fully utilise all of the additional adults to support children's learning, particularly those that have additional needs. Teachers' planning of the different activities incorporates children's ideas effectively. Parents contribute to children's record of learning well.
- Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught well in the early years. Teachers ensure that all children are engaged in the actions and are accurately saying the sounds. The repetition and rehearsal of the spoken language is helping those children who speak English as an additional language to have a better understanding of the English language. However, just occasionally, some of the most-able children show that they could learn more but are often restricted by the response from the teacher.
- Leadership and management of the early years provision are good. Risk assessments of the site are in place and up to date. Leaders ensure that children are kept safe at all times. Children show their awareness that the school keeps them safe through the way they question visitors about wearing the right coloured lanyard that they wear to show who they are. Leaders undertake regular checks on the quality of learning in the provision.

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	133288
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	453466

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	446
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim O'Sullivan
Headteacher	Angelina John
Date of previous school inspection	28 February–1 March 2013
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