

# St Elphege's RC Junior School

Mollison Drive, Roundshaw, Wallington, Surrey SM6 9HY

## Inspection dates

13–14 October 2015

## Overall effectiveness

**Outstanding**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- A sense of community and its Catholic ethos are central to the school's work. The headteacher has established a culture in which everyone is motivated to play their part. Whatever their role, all staff make a strong contribution to the positive experience pupils have of school.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. Senior leaders are knowledgeable, conscientious and highly effective in evaluating the quality of the school's work.
- Pupils' outcomes are outstanding. Pupils' attainment and progress are well above national averages. Disadvantaged pupils make progress similar to or better than that of other pupils nationally. Pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding. Lessons are well planned, taking into account what pupils have learnt previously. Teachers achieve a good balance between challenging pupils to achieve more and ensuring that concepts are fully understood.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Their positive attitudes and high levels of motivation play a significant part in their successful learning. Their confidence, resilience and ability to collaborate well with others, prepares them well for their futures.
- Effective measures are in place to ensure that pupils are, and feel, safe. Highly effective teaching has enabled pupils to gain a broad understanding of potential risks to their wellbeing as well as of measures they can take to protect themselves and others.
- The governing body has a thorough understanding of the school's performance. Its focus is unrelentingly on the pupils, their well-being and outcomes. On the basis of mutual trust and respect, it challenges leaders to continually improve pupils' outcomes.
- Parents are overwhelmingly complimentary about the school's work. They appreciate the subject workshops that enable them to support their children at home and the headteacher's presence around the school.

## **Full report**

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

- Ensure that all teachers, including those whose teaching the school judges to be outstanding, receive precise guidance about how their teaching can be improved.

# Inspection judgements

## Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The headteacher's commitment and drive have united the school community. She has established a culture in which aspirations are high, academic achievement is valued, and attention to individuals' needs and circumstances is given high priority. While the school's Catholic ethos is firmly at the centre of all it does, members of other faiths speak highly of the welcome they have received and the sense of belonging they feel.
- Highly effective arrangements are in place to ensure that teachers with leadership potential are given appropriate support and training. Well qualified senior leaders share their expertise with less experienced colleagues, working in partnership to support newly appointed subject leaders. This leads to more teachers having leadership roles and, consequently, a greater capacity for sustained school improvement.
- Leaders identify strengths and weaknesses of teaching accurately. They observe lessons in pairs so that expertise is shared and that judgements are moderated. Leaders' judgements about the quality of teaching are firmly linked to the progress pupils make, including that made by key groups of pupils. Teachers earlier in their careers receive more detailed feedback and clear guidance about how to improve their teaching. However, there is less clarity about the developmental areas identified for those with more experience.
- Weekly staff training is focused on topics identified by leaders, informed by their regular evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning. Staff value the training they receive and understand its relevance. It has a significant impact on the quality of teaching, improving the consistency of practice and ensuring that teachers keep up to date with the latest developments.
- The physical education and sport premium is spent wisely and effectively. The number of pupils participating in extra-curricular activities has increased significantly. In recognition of this the school was awarded a 'silver school games mark' in 2015. Pupils show great enthusiasm for sport with approximately 70 pupils taking part in the recent cross-country trials. Year 3 pupils speak highly of the lunchtime activities organised for them while they were in Year 2 by Year 6 pupils in their role of sports leaders.
- The curriculum has been constructed to ensure that pupils gain first-hand experiences on which to base their subsequent learning. This inspires them and encourages them to be curious and inquisitive. Leaders reflect regularly on the effectiveness of the curriculum and how well it meets pupils' needs. Recent improvements have included the provision of further guidance for teachers about what constitutes age related expectations in history, geography and art. Recently purchased practical mathematical resources provide additional support for pupils of all abilities.
- Opportunities for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are woven into all subjects. The school's Catholic designation provides numerous opportunities for spiritual development with pupils demonstrating great respect during times of reflection and prayer. Pupils demonstrate maturity in their discussion of moral and ethical issues, for example, the right of children across the globe, to an education.
- Workshops for parents are highly valued, especially those which explain the school's approach to the teaching of mathematics. They ensure that parents are able to support their children's learning at home using similar strategies to those taught at school.
- Well considered arrangements ensure that pupils' transition from the infant school is smooth. For example, Year 3 pupils continue to spend break and lunchtimes with the younger pupils for their first two terms in the junior school. Their high academic achievement and well developed social skills lead to pupils being exceedingly well prepared for secondary school. A well-planned programme of events supports pupils' smooth transition to secondary school. This includes workshops providing the opportunity for pupils to reflect on the choices, challenges and changes they are likely to experience as they begin the next stage of their education.
- Leaders ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed despite their background or circumstances. This extends beyond the tailored provision within the curriculum for pupils with additional needs. For example, school-owned bicycles and helmets are available for pupils' use during Bikeability training, led by trained school staff.
- **The governance of the school**
  - The governing body shares leaders' determination that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, receive the best possible education. The governing body and school leaders have established a highly effective, professional relationship underpinned by trust and accountability. Governors receive clear information from leaders outlining the school's performance including that of each year group and of different groups of pupils. Governors ask perceptive and searching questions of leaders, supplementing

their understanding of the school's work through focused visits.

- The governing body measures the impact of spending, both of the pupil premium grant and the physical education and sport funding, by taking into account any tangible improvements. They scrutinise information about pupils' performance to ensure that the funding is having the intended impact.
- The pay committee of the governing body carries out the performance management of the headteacher and oversees teachers' movement up the pay scale.
- Finances are well managed, significant capital resources having been deployed during the current school expansion project.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders work effectively with other agencies and parents, adopting a proactive approach to seeking support for pupils and families who are in most need. Well-kept records enable leaders to monitor the impact of any actions taken to address concerns. Leaders are vigilant and demonstrate an acute awareness of safeguarding topics including extremism, female genital mutilation and child sexual exploitation.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding**

- Staff seek every opportunity to support pupils' learning. Pupils arrive at school from 8:25am daily. Settling quickly, pupils complete 'early morning maths' activities which provide an opportunity to practise their numeracy skills and apply what they have learnt previously. This time, before the start of the school day, is also used to follow up work from the previous day where additional input from the teacher or teaching assistant is required.
- Teaching assistants are deployed effectively during lessons. They have a good understanding of what pupils are expected to achieve and of how best to support them. Highly effective training prepares teaching assistants well for their general support roles in the classroom, as well as the more specific roles they play in supporting pupils with special educational needs. Teaching assistants and teachers work together closely during lessons addressing pupils' questions in a timely manner.
- The teaching of mathematics is well structured. Activities are carefully chosen to ensure that pupils have gained a thorough understanding of concepts before moving on to a new topic. This results in pupils gaining a deeper and more secure understanding of the subject. Pupils show great maturity in the manner in which they discuss the subject with adults and each other. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils were keen to share their understanding of co-ordinates and the translation of two-dimensional shapes.
- Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills across all subjects. Particularly effective examples of work seen during the inspection include letters written in the role of Victorian children. The letters of application for jobs including 'maid of all work' and 'butler' demonstrated good subject knowledge and lively vocabulary as well as correct use of grammar, fluent handwriting and accurate spelling.
- Time is used well in lessons with teachers using their secure subject knowledge to act promptly in addressing pupils' misconceptions and to offer guidance about how to improve work.
- Teachers' feedback to pupils is regular and focused. In the best practice, teachers analyse how mistakes have occurred and provide helpful advice about how they can be avoided in subsequent work. Teachers are precise in their feedback, focusing on the extent to which pupils have understood the intended learning as opposed to merely noting whether a task has been completed.
- Pupils are given opportunities to explain their thinking, either verbally or in writing. This helps them to clarify their understanding as well as allowing the teacher to gauge how well a concept has been understood. As a result, teachers have an accurate picture of pupils' achievement. This enables them to provide work at the right level for each child.
- Homework is completed regularly, providing opportunities for pupils to practise what they have learned in school. Teachers' expectations of the quality of the work pupils complete at home are equal to those they have of pupils' classwork.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and make a significant contribution to pupils'

learning. Pupils demonstrated confidence and impeccable manners in introducing themselves to members of the inspection team.

- Pupils have a good appreciation of what it takes to be a good learner. They are not afraid of failure because they have learnt strategies to support themselves and others when work is challenging. Pupils have a good understanding of the need for work to be challenging. They are aware of the strategies their teachers use to ensure that work is neither too easy nor too hard.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of the procedures in place to keep them safe. They explain that the presence of the caretaker at the gate each morning and afternoon helps them feel safe and that the supervision by staff in the playground provides further reassurance. They know that they have a responsibility to look after each other and to show kindness and respect, regardless of any differences in cultural or faith.
- Pupils recall the videos they have seen about internet safety. They understand the need to consider carefully any personal information they share online. They understand that people they meet through internet gaming or on social media may not be who they purport to be.
- Pupils understand the benefits of them attending a school with an ethnically diverse population. Older pupils are able to explain that it prepares them well for life in multicultural Britain.
- Pupils understand the requirement that any snacks they take to school are healthy. They appreciate that snacks containing too much sugar do not provide the kind of sustenance they need to aid concentration.
- Opportunities to demonstrate responsibility at school are numerous. Elections are held for head girl, head boy and school councillors, while older pupils carry out work experience in the linked infant school. For the second year running, junior travel ambassadors recently received a gold award in recognition of the school's work on sustainability.
- The varied experiences offered beyond the curriculum make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. Music has a high profile in the school with musical ensembles taking part in concerts and competitions locally and nationally. In 2015, the school's djembe drummers and choir performed at the regional Music for Youth finals with the drum ensemble progressing to the national finals in Birmingham.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are extremely positive. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of the importance of education and can explain its relevance to gaining employment in the future. This has a significant impact on pupils' academic success.
- Pupils respond quickly to adults' instructions whether in the classroom, dining hall, playground or during assembly. Breakfast club and lunchtimes are sociable occasions with pupils engaging in conversation with their friends and adults. Pupils of different ages, ethnicities and genders integrate well with one another.
- Pupils take care over their work. Books are well presented with teachers upholding their high expectations.
- Pupils exercise self-discipline, regulating their own behaviour without the need for close supervision. They demonstrate an acute awareness of the needs of others and a respect for opinions that differ from their own. Pupils say it is extremely rare for poor behaviour to interrupt their learning.
- Pupils' attendance has improved during the last three years and is now higher than average. The most recent figures indicate that this improvement is being maintained. Where individual pupils' attendance has been poor in the past, school leaders have adopted supportive and effective strategies to tackle the situation.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their school.

## Outcomes for pupils

**are outstanding**

- Since the last inspection, pupils' attainment has been consistently high. A significantly higher proportion of pupils than seen nationally reach the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school. A significantly higher proportion of pupils than average exceed the expected standard. In 2015, four fifths of pupils achieved Level 5 in the reading test and in the English grammar, spelling and punctuation test. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 5 in writing was also well above the national average.
- The most-able pupils achieve well. A high proportion of pupils start Year 3 with high levels of literacy and numeracy. Despite their high starting points, they continue to make strong progress. Higher proportions

than average progress to the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Over a quarter of pupils achieved Level 6 in the 2015 national tests in mathematics.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils making the expected progress is equal to, or higher than that of other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportions of disadvantaged pupils and others in school attaining the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics were similar in 2015. This represents a narrowing of the gap since 2014.
- Scrutiny of their work indicates that pupils currently on roll are making sustained progress as a result of outstanding teaching.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers in school because of the tailored and highly effective support they receive. Their progress is closely monitored and provision adapted according to their changing needs.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress, sometimes having started at the school speaking little or no English. An effective programme to support their language acquisition ensures that they catch up with their peers quickly. In the 2015 national tests, all pupils in this group achieved the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102996
<b>Local authority</b>	Sutton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10001383

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	294
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tom Tamplin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Frances Hawkes
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8669 6306
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stelphegesrcschools.org.uk">www.stelphegesrcschools.org.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:junior-office@stelphegesrcschools.org.uk">junior-office@stelphegesrcschools.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	January 2011

## Information about this school

- St Elphege's RC Junior school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of a federation which also incorporates St Elphege's RC Infants' School and Regina Coeli Catholic Primary School. The headteacher is the executive headteacher of the federation and a national leader of education. Regina Coeli Catholic Primary School joined the federation in November 2014, having previously been judged to require special measures. It received support from the headteacher and senior leaders and was judged to be a good school at its last inspection, in March 2015.
- St Elphege's RC Junior and Infants' schools operate as one school, sharing the same leadership team.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is slightly higher than average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is higher than average.
- The school population reflects a wide range of ethnicities.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards (the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress).
- The school's last Section 48 inspection of religious education took place in June 2011. The school's overall effectiveness as a Catholic school was graded as outstanding.
- A building project to provide additional accommodation is nearing completion. This will result in there being three classes in each of the year groups by September 2018.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited all classrooms jointly with senior leaders to observe teaching and learning.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders and a group of teaching and support staff. The lead inspector also met with three governors including the Chair of the Governing Body. He also held a meeting with a representative of the Archdiocese of Southwark and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with parents in the playground at the start of the school day. They also met with a group of pupils and spoke with others during visits to lessons and during break and lunchtimes.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including records relating to safeguarding, leaders' views of the quality of teaching and the school's own evaluation of its performance.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and observed them at play and during an assembly.
- Inspectors took account of the 32 responses to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire) and a letter addressed to the inspection team by a parent.

## Inspection team

Jeremy Loukes, lead inspector

Grace Marriott

Kanwaljit Singh

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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