

# St George's Cathedral Catholic Primary School

28 Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HR

## Inspection dates

12–13 December 2018

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>Good</b>          |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Good</b>          |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Good</b>          |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Good</b>          |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | <b>Good</b>          |
| Early years provision                        | <b>Good</b>          |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The executive headteacher and headteacher were appointed in September 2017. Together, they have galvanised the team to drive forward improvement. As a result, previous underperformance has been challenged and leaders are well set to make further improvements.
- Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's priorities and are taking effective action to address any underachievement.
- Governors are determined to improve the school. They ask challenging questions to check the effectiveness of actions being taken.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are positive about all aspects of the school's work.
- Children in early years make a strong start to their education. They make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for the key stage 1 curriculum.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and courteous. They enjoy coming to school. They show great respect for each other. They are eager to explain their learning and share their ideas.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are intertwined through the curriculum.
- Teaching and learning are good because senior leaders make regular checks, model high expectations and provide high-quality training for staff.
- Not all teachers are sufficiently adept at challenging pupils to make the most progress of which they are capable. Some of the tasks set are not well matched to pupils' abilities. This is especially so for the most able pupils.
- There are increasing opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum. When writing in subjects other than English, pupils do not routinely apply their knowledge of spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Middle leaders are new to post and are not consistently contributing to whole-school improvement.
- Although the curriculum is broad and balanced, leaders do not closely monitor pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics. As a result, pupils' progress in these subjects is variable.

## Full report

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

- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and outcomes for pupils, by ensuring that:
  - teachers closely match work to pupils’ abilities, so that pupils gain a deep understanding of concepts, especially for the most able pupils
  - teachers have the same high expectations of pupils’ use of spelling, grammar and punctuation when writing across all subjects.
- Ensure that pupils make consistently good progress in subjects other than English and mathematics, by closely monitoring the coverage of skills in these subjects.
- Develop the leadership and management skills of middle leaders, so that they are fully involved in the ongoing improvements to teaching, learning and assessment of their subject areas.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- When the new leadership team was brokered into the school, it was in a period of decline. They wasted no time in challenging underperformance to stabilise the school. Parents, leaders and governors talked with great enthusiasm about how this school has improved since their appointment. Together with the wider leadership team, they provide strong, sharply focused leadership. They are well supported by an effective governing body.
- Leaders have clear, ambitious aspirations for the school and these are shared and understood by the school community. Leaders and governors work together to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the main issues they need to address to improve the school further. School improvement planning is effective. Detailed plans include appropriate priorities based on leaders' accurate evaluations. Regular evaluations of progress drive continued improvement.
- Senior leaders carry out regular monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning. These processes have had a substantial positive impact on standards across the school. Monitoring is helping teachers to improve the quality of teaching and to know how well pupils are progressing. This is most notable in English and mathematics.
- Pupils have excellent enrichment experiences that contribute to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as their understanding of British values. Pupils learn to play instruments, perform to audiences and join a range of extra-curricular clubs. Pupils also gain a first-hand experience of democracy by electing their school council.
- The curriculum is further enhanced with extra activities to broaden pupils' experiences and help them know more about the world around them. These activities include trips out, visitors to the school and visits to museums and galleries. For example, pupils in Year 6 visited The Guardian newspaper offices and had the opportunity to edit and publish their own newspaper.
- Leaders and governors carefully check the impact of pupil premium funding. They have a clear understanding of which of their targeted interventions is having the greatest impact on learning. They are quick to change and modify less effective interventions. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make good progress.
- Leaders have overhauled provision and practice for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Early identification of pupils' needs, coupled with working effectively with external agencies have resulted in well-targeted support for this group of pupils. Consequently, pupils with SEND make good progress from their different starting points.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding is spent effectively. Leaders use the funding to support staff training and to expose pupils to a wide range of sporting activities. As a result, teachers have improved their own skills, and pupils participate in competitions and learn a variety of sporting skills, including archery and ice-skating.

- The overwhelming majority of parents are supportive of the work of the school. Most parents would recommend the school to another parent. They believe that the school is well led and managed.
- Over the last year, leaders have relentlessly focused on improving and developing the teaching of English and mathematics, to good effect. However, pupils' progress in, and coverage of, other subjects have not been closely monitored. As a result, pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics is inconsistent.
- Although middle leaders are aware of what needs further improving in their areas of responsibility, they are not fully involved in the strategic development of their subjects. Senior leaders have rightly identified that middle leaders need more opportunities to monitor and evaluate pupils' outcomes in their subject areas.

### **Governance of the school**

- Since the previous inspection, governance has improved. A new chair of governors has been appointed. Governors have undertaken a review of how the governing body works and have implemented an action plan to address areas for improvement. The governing body was reorganised and new governors were recruited based on the skills that they could offer. Governors have been proactive in seeking support to develop their roles and expertise. Through a skills audit, they have ensured that their strengths are well matched to the needs of the school.
- Governors work alongside leaders to gain first-hand knowledge of how the school runs on a day-to-day basis. They receive high-quality information from school leaders, which they use to inform their work. They are not afraid to ask challenging questions or take decisive actions when they have concerns.
- Governors have a strong commitment to the school and clear determination to ensure that they continue its road to further improvement.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils are aware of how to keep safe. They are confident that adults will help them if they have a worry or are concerned.
- Leaders are aware of the issues in the local community and work effectively with external agencies and other providers to address these and educate pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that appropriate checks are made on staff, governors and regular visitors to school to ensure that they are suitable people to work with children.
- All parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire felt that their children are safe at school.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Leaders and staff have created a happy, purposeful environment that is helping pupils become independent, confident learners.
- Staff have built positive relationships that enable pupils to develop their self-esteem. As a result, pupils are developing positive attitudes towards their learning.
- Pupils are encouraged to discuss their learning and work collaboratively in many lessons. Where teaching is having the most positive impact, teachers display good subject knowledge, and this enables them to question, probe and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- The teaching of reading is steadily improving. The teaching of phonics is carefully developed in early years and key stage 1. As a result, pupils get off to a good start with their reading. Pupils read fluently and widely. They talked readily about the books they enjoy and offered their opinions about different authors.
- Pupils write at length and for a variety of purposes. Teachers are skilled at demonstrating different styles of writing. Pupils are increasingly encouraged to write across areas of the curriculum. For example, in Year 6, pupils wrote a diary entry from the perspective of a Victorian child. Pupils are not consistently applying the skills they learn in English when writing in other subjects.
- Pupils demonstrate a secure understanding of their basic mathematical skills. They use practical resources to help them learn new concepts and have numerous opportunities to quickly recall number facts. As a result, a high proportion of pupils reach the standards in mathematics expected for their age.
- Teachers are not sufficiently adept at planning work that demands enough of the most able pupils. Often, the activities are too easy and pupils spend too much of their learning time rehearsing concepts they already know. Consequently, this limits pupils from making as much progress as they are capable of.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils were confident to speak with the inspectors and engaged with them enthusiastically. Pupils said that they enjoy lessons that are challenging. They are not afraid to make mistakes because they learn from these.
- Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy coming because they say adults help them to understand their learning in lessons. Parents share this viewpoint and are overwhelmingly supportive.
- Pupils are interested in each other's ideas and show a high level of respect for each other. They support each other well, especially in paired work in lessons, and encourage those who are less sure of themselves.

- There is an increasing number of pupils who join the school part-way through the year. Many of these pupils are new to speaking English. Effective induction arrangements are in place to support these pupils and their families. As a result, these pupils settle well and make friends quickly.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe. They said that they feel safe in school. Pupils spoke about the work they have done on safety, such as their anti-bullying, e-safety and fire safety lessons. Health and safety are promoted through the curriculum.
- Pupils are confident that any incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly by staff. Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare but, if issues do arise, they trust the staff to sort them out quickly. Pupils are happy to talk to staff about their concerns.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and considerate. They conduct themselves well around the school. The school is an orderly environment.
- Pupils take pride in this school and in their appearance. There is no litter in or around the buildings and pupils adhere to the school's uniform code.
- Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, which are robustly and consistently implemented across the school. Pupils are kind, considerate and courteous to one another and work alongside each other to share ideas in lessons. They were keen to discuss their school with inspectors and talked with great pride about all aspects of school life.
- Staff have effective relationships with pupils. These relationships have created a culture of openness in which pupils can learn safely and are not afraid to 'have a go'.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve pupils' attendance and most pupils now attend school regularly. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school is also falling.
- Most of the parents who completed Ofsted's online survey agreed that pupils behave well in school.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Since the last inspection, outcomes for pupils have improved. Work in pupils' books shows that this improvement is being sustained.
- Most children begin at the school with skills that are below those typical for their age. In the last three years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception Year has been above the national average. Children leave early years with a good start to their education.
- Owing to high-quality phonics teaching, pupils made strong gains in phonics in 2018 as compared with the previous year.
- Attainment data in 2018 showed that pupils in key stage 1 attained above the national

average for reading, writing and mathematics at the expected standard. This is because of teachers building carefully on the knowledge, understanding and skills that pupils have gained in early years.

- In 2018, mathematics attainment at key stage 2 was above national expectations.
- Current standards in reading are typically good. Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils, listened to them read and analysed their reading records. Pupils enjoy reading and can articulate the strategies they use to understand a variety of texts.
- Progress for disadvantaged pupils is improving quickly. This is because of effective tracking by school leaders, targeted teaching and careful planning of next steps.
- Through targeted support, pupils with SEND are making good progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress from their different starting points. This is also true of those pupils who join mid-term.
- The most able pupils have yet to reach higher standards of attainment. Despite improvements in teaching, teachers are not sufficiently skilled at challenging this group of pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics is variable. This is because leaders are not systematically monitoring pupils' progress in these subjects.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The early years leader is enthusiastic and capable. She has an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. She leads and plans well. Her aspirations for the children, and for the provision, are high.
- Children in early years make a good start at the school. They enter Nursery with standards below those typical for their age. Children make good progress and achieve well in relation to their starting points. Interventions are targeted carefully and, as a result, children make good progress.
- The quality of teaching in early years is good and improving. This is because of effective monitoring and support from leaders. Leaders ensure that assessments are accurate by regularly checking them with other providers and external quality assurance professionals.
- Staff provide high-quality care to children. Consequently, children feel safe and they behave well. Children are developing positive behaviours for learning. They concentrate well and show resilience when carrying out tasks. They get on well together, share resources and enjoy learning.
- Some children have barriers to learning such as speech, language and communication difficulties. Staff sensitively provide additional help for these children. This includes working with external agencies such as speech therapists. This helps these children to make good progress and prevents them from falling behind their classmates.
- Staff have established positive relationships with parents. This helps to promote security and consistency in the children's lives. Parents are kept well informed about

their children's progress and are encouraged to contribute to their learning.

- Safeguarding procedures are effective and statutory requirements are met.

## School details

|                         |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Unique reference number | 100828    |
| Local authority         | Southwark |
| Inspection number       | 10047362  |

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 to 11  |
| Gender of pupils                    | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 226  |
| Appropriate authority               | The governing body   |
| Chair                               | Jane Goring  |
| Headteacher                         | Janice Babb  |
| Telephone number                    | 0207 525 9250  |
| Website                             | <a href="http://www.stgcs.southwark.sch.uk">www.stgcs.southwark.sch.uk</a>       |
| Email address                       | <a href="mailto:office@stgcs.southwark.sch.uk">office@stgcs.southwark.sch.uk</a> |
| Date of previous inspection         | 4–5 May 2016   |

## Information about this school

- The school is in the process of reducing from two-form entry to one-form entry.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The school is in an area of high deprivation when compared nationally.
- The number of pupils who have support for SEND is below average.
- Since the previous inspection, a new executive headteacher, headteacher and chair of governors have been appointed.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in a range of lessons, covering all classes in the school. Senior leaders accompanied inspectors on some observations.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and middle leaders.
- The lead inspector also met with the chair of the governing body and other governors.
- The lead inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority and the archdiocese.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during break- and lunchtimes.
- Pupils read to inspectors and inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the inspection to gain their views.
- Meetings and discussions were held with the senior leadership team, staff, parents and pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of evidence, including the school's documentation on pupils' attainment and progress, safeguarding, and behaviour and attendance, minutes of governing body meetings, the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvements, and external reviews of the school.
- Inspectors considered the 33 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, as well as speaking to parents directly. No staff or pupils completed the Ofsted questionnaires.

## Inspection team

|                               |                  |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Jenell Chetty, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Shelley Davies                | Ofsted Inspector |
| Jeff Cole                     | Ofsted Inspector |

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