

# St Vincent's RC Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101143
<b>Local Authority</b>	Westminster
<b>Inspection number</b>	307602
<b>Inspection date</b>	6 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Barry Jones

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>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	223
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Joe Hegarty
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Marina Coleman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 October 2003
<b>School address</b>	St Vincent Street Marylebone London W1U 4DF
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7641 6110
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7641 6116

---

<b>Age group</b>	3-11
<b>Inspection date</b>	6 November 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	307602

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- Foundation Stage
- pupils' achievement
- aspects of pupils' personal development and well-being that the school considered to be outstanding
- care, support and guidance.

Evidence was gathered from performance data, external monitoring, observations of teaching and the work produced by pupils. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with parents, children, the chair of governors, staff and the school improvement partner also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

St Vincent's is a popular, inner-city school that serves an area which is more disadvantaged than most. Pupils come from a wide area and often from slightly advantaged backgrounds. However, this varies from year to year and particularly because the school has more pupils who join at unusual times than most schools. There are higher proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Vincent's is a good school with some outstanding features. It has strong leadership, a very caring ethos and strong links with the Catholic church. This underpins the excellent personal development of the pupils and means that they have very positive attitudes and enjoy school very much. The school makes a very good contribution to promoting community cohesion. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. As one parent said, 'There is a real sense of belonging to a St Vincent's community. This is all the more special given its location in central London.'

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage as a result of good teaching. They continue to receive good teaching and make good progress through the school. Strengths of the teaching include skilled management of classes, effective use of a wide range of resources. Teachers know their pupils well. As a result, pupils attain standards that are consistently above average in national assessments at the end of Year 2. Standards of attainment fluctuate a little more in national tests at the end of Year 6 but are above average overall. Provisional results for 2007 show a dip in performance. This was expected in part, as the year group contained an unusually high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The school's own monitoring shows that some older pupils are not progressing as rapidly in mathematics as in other subjects. For instance, the school missed its target for mathematics in 2007 but achieved others. Rigorous self-evaluation by the school followed by strong action is one of the reasons for its success. Scrutiny of teachers' plans revealed that insufficient emphasis was being given to providing pupils with opportunities to use their mathematics in meaningful contexts. The school has analysed how well pupils do in different aspects of learning, is providing extra staffing and training and has strengthened the leadership of the subject. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of these very comprehensive measures. However, the school's tracking indicates that standards generally will rise in the 2008 national tests for Year 6 pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make the same progress as their classmates because of the good provision.

A considerable strength of the school is the very high quality of care provided to pupils. This is achieved through excellent links with a range of external agencies, which complements the support provided in the school. For instance, there are excellent procedures to help pupils settle who join the school at unusual times. Other pupils act as 'buddies' and in some instances help with language where the incoming pupil has little spoken English. The learning mentor provides additional help to forge links with the family. The school rightly concludes that this is 'a happy, hard-working school with a calm environment, where everyone is valued as an individual and each has a contribution to make to the life of the school.'

Adults provide excellent role models and this underpins pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a very harmonious community in which different cultures are respected. One pupil summed this up and said, 'We are one big family'. Pupils feel very safe and are confident that there is an adult that will listen if they have a problem. Consequently, rare instances of bullying are dealt with effectively and other concerns are addressed sensitively. Behaviour is exemplary, lessons are not disrupted and this contributes to the positive learning environment. Pupils respond enthusiastically to opportunities to take responsibility. For instance, school council members take their role seriously. They learn an understanding of the democratic process by issuing well thought-out manifestos and taking part in elections. There is a long

established tradition of raising monies for charities and excellent involvement in the local community.

Pupils are provided with a good range of experiences that maintains their interest and adds to their enjoyment. There is excellent provision for health education and the school makes best use of the small play areas. The school has healthy schools status and pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy-living issues. For instance, the school council chose to use a substantial part of its budget to provide fruit to pupils. Opportunities to participate in sport have increased considerably in the last year. 'Enterprise week' was introduced two years ago and is popular. This significantly increases the pupils' understanding of the world of work. Together with their good basic skills, this means that pupils are well prepared for later life. This is complemented by other themed weeks as well as visits to places of interest. Some coordinators are relatively new to their role and further enhancements to the curriculum are planned.

There is a strong, unified senior management team which is ably led by a very good headteacher. Parents speak highly of the headteacher and a typical comment is that 'the leadership goes from strength to strength'. Senior managers have maintained very high levels of care and good standards through a period when it has been difficult to retain staff in an area where accommodation is very expensive. Throughout the school there is now a very rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress. The information from these assessments is used very well to identify underperformance and by teachers to plan work for pupils of different abilities. There have been gains in the Foundation Stage. This is an improving school and its track record shows that capacity to improve further is good.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are broadly average for their age. The school has worked closely with the local authority and has successfully addressed the issues raised in the previous report. In particular, there is now a good balance of teacher-led activities and opportunities for children to learn through well-structured play. There is still limited outside play area but plans are well advanced to rectify this. There have been several changes in staff, including the coordinator role, in recent years but this has now stabilised. There are good systems to check how well children are doing. These assessments are used effectively by teachers to plan work to meet the different needs of children. Strong leadership means that previous inconsistencies in provision have been resolved. Consequently, as a result of the measures taken there was a significant improvement in 2007 across all areas of learning. More children attained or exceeded the Early Learning Goals than in most schools.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that all pupils in Key Stage 2 have sufficient opportunities to use mathematics in meaningful contexts and make consistently good progress.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No



## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

16 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Vincent's RC Primary School, London, W1U 4DF

Many thanks for your help and cooperation when I inspected your school. You enjoy coming to school and feel very safe there. Some members of your school council told me that their views are valued. They told me that they made suggestions which have been accepted by the school. In the past they have used their budget to buy fruit for older pupils. The younger ones already have this through funding by the lottery. Other pupils told me how they value 'trust buddies' and 'play leaders'.

You told me that St Vincent's is a very good school and I agree. You are rightly proud of your school. The things that I liked are that:

- you behave very well and lessons take place without disruption
- you all get along very well with one another
- you make other pupils who join the school very welcome
- you do well in your work
- teachers make sure that you do interesting things in the classroom or through visits and clubs
- you have good teachers who have your interests at heart
- the school is led very well by the headteacher and her team.

The school is always trying to do even better. They are already doing many things to make further improvements in mathematics. I have asked them to ensure this means you do as well in mathematics as in your other work. Make sure you ask if you do not understand. The teachers will be very pleased to help you.

Once again, thank you. I wish you continuing success in the future.

Barry Jones

Lead inspector