

St Edward's RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101128
Local Authority	Westminster
Inspection number	323407
Inspection dates	4–5 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Kekshan Salaria HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	414
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Father Duncan Adamson
Headteacher	Mrs Maureen Donnelly
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lisson Grove Marylebone London NW1 6LH
Telephone number	020 7723 5911
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Edward's is a two-form entry Catholic primary school. The majority of the pupils are from a diverse range of backgrounds, the largest group being White Other. The proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is well above that found nationally. There are approximately 36 languages spoken by the school community. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. These are mostly in the areas of speech, language and communication, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The proportion eligible for free school meals is nearly double that found nationally.

The school has Investors in People and Activemark Awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Edward's is a good school and reflects the determination of senior leaders to make sure that good teaching and learning are firmly established across the school. Leadership and management are good and contribute significantly to the high quality of education in the school. The headteacher has successfully promoted effective teamwork and a family atmosphere. Almost all parents speak well of the school. 'I am very pleased with my child's progress. This is thanks to the excellent teachers and leaders at St Edward's', is one of the enthusiastic quotes reflecting the majority of parents and carers who are positive about the school.

Findings from the good monitoring systems are shared with teachers, and patterns that emerge from lesson observations inform staff training and performance management. The progress made by pupils is carefully checked and a summary is usefully reported to the governing body. Governors are committed to the school. They provide good support. They regularly monitor the work of the school and contribute well to key decisions. Provision for community cohesion is satisfactory. However, although there is a strong cohesive community within the school, senior leaders have not strategically analysed what the school needs to do to address cohesion within the wider community.

Pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are taught outstandingly well. They join the school with levels of skills, knowledge and understanding that are well below those usually expected for their age, particularly in the areas of communication, language and literacy. They make very good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school had anticipated a dip in standards in 2007 and paid close attention to improving writing and mathematics skills. As a result, standards in these subjects have improved. By the time pupils leave the school at Year 6, standards are broadly average. Considering the well below average starting points of most pupils, this represents good progress.

Teachers successfully engage their pupils by planning interesting activities that motivate them to work hard. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because teachers and teaching assistants working together implement carefully planned individual programmes effectively. However, the marking policy is not implemented consistently and, as a result, not all pupils receive targeted guidance in how to improve their work or take the next step in their learning. This limits their development as independent learners. The curriculum is good and pupils have numerous opportunities to widen their experiences through stimulating visits and a good range of extra-curricular activities.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils are polite, well mannered and confident when talking with each other and adults. They value their school greatly, participate in, and enjoy the many opportunities that it offers. This is demonstrated by their regular attendance, willingness to participate fully in lessons and excellent behaviour.

Teachers and staff know pupils well and care for them successfully. Effective liaison with a wide range of outside agencies helps to support vulnerable pupils. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils' welfare are good. The school communicates well with parents and is particularly good at working with parents of children with learning needs. The great majority of parents appreciate both the approachable, caring attitude of the staff and the inclusive, welcoming atmosphere, which supports their children.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children enter the school with levels of skills, knowledge and understanding that are well below those usually expected for their age. This is particularly the case in communication, language and literacy. They make very good progress so that by the time they leave Reception their skills have developed very well. This is because children have opportunities to explore, have stimulating and practical activities such as the 'pirates' theme, and time to practice skills such as counting. The Nursery outdoor area is very well resourced. Children benefit from a good balance of teacher-led and independently chosen activities which provide valuable opportunities to develop independent learning skills. There is a good emphasis on language acquisition and the development of personal and social skills. Consequently, children, including those with limited English language skills, learn to communicate and socialise effectively. Additional adults provide good support and they are committed to providing high-quality care within a safe and stimulating learning environment. Planning is thorough and very good records of children's progress enable staff to challenge children to build on their learning. Valuable links with parents help children to settle quickly, become familiar with the routines and develop confidence. Children are well prepared for the transition to the next phase of their learning. Leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage are exemplary.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement by strengthening the academic guidance that pupils receive and ensure it is consistently applied.
- Improve the promotion of community cohesion.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children get off to a very good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1. As a result of the focus on improving writing and more detailed attention paid to tracking progress in English and mathematics, the decline in standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2007 has been reversed. Unvalidated data in Key Stage 2 for 2008 suggest that standards overall are rising and are broadly in line with national averages, with very good improvements in mathematics and good improvements in English and science evident. The current Year 2 and Year 6 have been set challenging targets which school data show they are well placed to meet.

The school provides well for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These pupils are carefully integrated into the school and make good progress. Pupils for whom English is not their first language also make good progress because they receive effective early support so that their individual learning needs are met well and their fluency in English improves.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding and is strongly promoted at the school. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are eager to learn, are caring and look after each other. Pupils are very well mannered and friendly to visitors. They are keen to say what they like about their school. Pupils are encouraged to express their feelings, so that by Year 6 they are confident, articulate and well prepared for their secondary school. Attendance is improving and broadly

in line with the national average. Pupils' understanding of how to stay healthy is supported by a good knowledge of how to eat healthily. Although restricted by outdoor play space, the school has appropriate plans in place to develop provision in physical education. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assembly and collective worship times provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect and support the school's Catholic ethos well.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching exists right across the school. Most lessons consist of a variety of interesting tasks so pupils remain attentive and involved in their work. There is a good learning atmosphere in all classes. Pupils enjoy discussions, respond to questions confidently and work with enthusiasm alone or in small groups. Teachers' skills in using assessment information to monitor pupils' progress is good. This helps to identify speedily those at risk of falling behind and to deploy effective support. In the few lessons where teaching is satisfactory, teachers do not readily adapt tasks if pupils do not respond as expected. In particular, in these lessons, teachers spend too much time talking, allowing insufficient time for pupils to explore issues for themselves, consolidate their understanding or reflect on what they have learned. Teaching assistants are well trained and work in a strong partnership with teachers. They provide good support for pupils who need additional help with their learning or who are at the early stages of speaking English. Most classrooms are bright and attractive, with high-quality pupils' work on display.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides its pupils with a broad and interesting curriculum. There is a good emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Senior leaders have identified the need to review the information, communication and technology curriculum to enhance cross-curriculum opportunities. The school makes good use of educational visits and visitors to enhance learning. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their residential visit and the varied range of activities available. Provision for extra-curricular clubs is good. The extended day also allows opportunities for pupils to develop academically and targeted groups receive good guidance. Good support is given to pupils with English as an additional language to access the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support pupils receive are good. Staff make sure that pupils, including those who arrive at different times, settle happily into school and feel confident about moving to the next stage of their education. Staff know the pupils very well. They have established good relationships with them and their parents. Pupils report that all adults in the school are very kind and caring. This good pastoral care and support has a significant influence on pupils' enjoyment of school and their outstanding personal development. Child protection, risk assessment and safeguarding procedures fully meet requirements and the school has robust procedures in place to ensure that all pupils are safe. Tracking is used well to match work to pupils' abilities and provide timely support. This is particularly effective for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and they make good progress as a result.

There are inconsistencies in the specific academic guidance that teachers give through their marking of pupils' work. While good examples of marking were seen, it does not always guide pupils on what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides a strong lead with a determination to ensure that all pupils reach their potential. She cultivates teamwork among all adults in the school so that everyone recognises that they have a part to play. The quality of leadership and management at all levels is good. Senior and middle leaders play a key role in leading aspects of improvement. They are actively involved in monitoring, reviewing and planning for improvement. There is a common sense of purpose and systems for developing the school further are well embedded. For example, strong induction systems for newly qualified teachers help to maintain the good quality of teaching and learning and provide long-term stability in staffing. The quality of teaching has been systematically improved through high-quality professional development and, where appropriate, specific support, training and mentoring. There is a clear focus on raising standards and promoting the personal development and well-being of pupils. This has resulted in a school with a strong ethos within which pupils develop very well personally and academically.

The governing body is fully involved in the life of the school, serves it well, and has a good knowledge of its strengths and areas for development. They are fully supportive of the school's development as shown by governors' close monitoring of achievement and standards and their determination to improve the school premises.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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 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?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

18 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Edward's RC Primary School, London, NW1 6LH

You may remember a team of inspectors visited your school recently. I would like to thank you for making the team feel so welcome. We appreciate the help many of you gave to us by talking about your work and sharing your views. It was very clear to all of us that you enjoy being at your school, which provides a good quality of education overall.

These are the best features about your school.

- It is a very happy place where you enjoy your lessons and get on well with each other. Your behaviour is excellent and you work and play together happily.
- You are well cared for so that you feel safe and supported. Pupils who have difficulties of any kind are supported very well.
- The Nursery and Reception classes are such an exciting and interesting place to be. Many of your lessons are good.
- Your teachers keep a good check on your progress, make most of your lessons interesting and help you to enjoy your learning.
- The school is well led by your headteacher and her team. They want the very best for you and are determined that you should make as much progress as you can in lessons.

As well as identifying what is good about the school we are also making some suggestions to help it improve.

- Some of the marking in your books is very good. We would like all marking in all subjects to be as good as the best so that it tells you how to improve your work.

Yours faithfully

Kekshan Salaria

Her Majesty's Inspector