

# Saint Vincent Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101926
<b>Local Authority</b>	Ealing
<b>Inspection number</b>	323552
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christopher Grove

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	413
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Gerard O'Brien
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Christina Cleugh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 May 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	1 Pierpoint Road Acton London W3 9JR

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 May 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	323552

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Vincent's Catholic Primary is larger than average. Most pupils come from three local Catholic parishes. The highest proportion of pupils is from a White British background, but there are also substantial numbers from eastern European, mainly Polish, and from Black British Caribbean, African and Asian backgrounds. Almost half the pupils speak English as an additional language, but only a small proportion are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, principally moderate learning or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, is also broadly average. Pupils' mobility is broadly average. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of two Reception classes. The school has gained several awards, including the International School (intermediate) and the Activemark awards. The breakfast club is managed by the governing body.

## 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 Catholic Primary is a good school. Many parents express positive views about the school. These views are well summarised by the parent who wrote that he was 'very happy with all aspects of the school and with both my children's progress'. The links with other organisations, including local Catholic parishes, other schools and the services of the local authority, are good. The partnership with most parents is good, although some express concerns.

Pupils' good personal development and well-being are evident in their enjoyment of school, as almost all respondents to the parental questionnaire agreed. Pupils' involvement in lessons and the extra-curricular programme has very positive benefits for their personal development. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as is evident in their sense of spirituality and the excellent singing and participation in assembly.

On entry to the school, pupils' knowledge and skills are variable, but are generally as expected for their age. They attain broadly average standards by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, pupils' overall standards have consistently been significantly above average in recent years. This shows that, across the school, pupils make good overall progress from their starting points, leading to good achievement.

Good teaching and learning lead to pupils' good progress. Teachers create excellent relationships with their pupils. This results in a positive atmosphere for learning. Pupils' interest is well sustained by a lively pace in lessons and good use of praise. The curriculum is appropriately broad and offers pupils a wide range of experiences. The excellent pastoral care is an important factor in pupils' enjoyment of school. Academic support and guidance are good.

Leadership and management, and governance, are good. Senior leaders and managers have set a clear direction for the improvement of the school. The school works well to include pupils from a wide range of social backgrounds. Extensive monitoring activities, in which all leaders are involved, have resulted in a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in pupils' outcomes and in the school's provision. However, the current access to data does not enable leaders to track the progress of different groups of pupils with sufficient precision, or to set appropriately challenging targets.

Some parents express long-standing reservations about aspects of leadership and governance, in spite of significant attempts by governors and by the Catholic diocese to achieve reconciliation with the school. Inspectors noted the balance of parents' positive and negative views about school leadership and governance, but did not find evidence to support the reservations.

Effective steps have been taken since the last inspection to make the improvements required, including improving the quality of teaching and of the curriculum. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Although children's attainment in 2008 was broadly average, their achievement in writing and calculation was good. Attainment in the current year is on track to be above average. Children are making more rapid progress because teaching and learning are good and the curriculum is practical and stimulating. They settle quickly because of the nurturing environment and the good opportunities for visiting before they start school. Children develop well personally and

academically because relationships and care are very good. Letters and sounds are taught systematically, and this has a positive impact on pupils' achievement in literacy. There is a good mix of adult-led activities and opportunities for children to follow their interests so that they develop skills progressively. The classrooms have been reorganised, and provide well for learning in all aspects of the curriculum. Children particularly enjoy gardening, and growing vegetables. This also makes a good contribution to understanding how to keep healthy.

Assessment systems are now rigorous, providing accurate information on children's starting points and their progress. Staff know the children well and keep good records of their achievements. Teamwork is very strong. Consequently, children benefit from consistent routines and high expectations.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well managed by the new leader. Clear priorities for improvement are set, based on thorough monitoring. For example, the outdoor area offers good learning opportunities, but lacks cover which prevents its use in inclement weather. Plans are in hand to remedy this. Action has also been taken to smooth transition arrangements to Year 1, though this remains an area for further improvement.

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

- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 so that pupils achieve as well as they do in Years 3 to 6.
- Improve the use of assessment data in order to track more effectively the progress of different groups of pupils and to set more challenging targets.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Since the last inspection, the school has consistently maintained significantly above average standards by the end of Year 6. Although standards were a little lower in 2008, especially in English, overall standards remained significantly above average. The proportion of pupils who attain the higher Level 5 standard is above average in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence shows that as a result of good teaching pupils are currently making good progress in Years 3 to 6. National data show that pupils' progress is best in English and science, but also that all groups of pupils, including those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, have made good progress in recent years, although the school itself cannot track the progress of pupil groups.

Standards at the end of Year 2 have remained broadly average in recent times, though standards in writing improved a little in 2008. The proportion of pupils who attain the higher Level 3 is broadly average in reading, and above average in writing and mathematics. However, in all three subjects, too few pupils reach expected standards.

The high proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language reach slightly higher standards than their peers nationally by the end of Year 2, and much higher standards by the end of Year 6. Good support for these pupils has been provided through a Polish-speaking assistant, and through the Black Children's Achievement Programme (BCAP).

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' practice of healthy lifestyles is outstanding. They show an excellent understanding of healthy living, and recognise the value of healthy eating and the importance of physical activity, for instance through participation in sport. The 'Supergrounds' initiative, which has enabled pupils to cultivate vegetable plots and grow their own food, promotes their understanding and their wider environmental awareness. They proudly wear 'footprint' badges to show that they have walked to school as part of the travel plan, or participated instead in a weekly playground walk. Pupils are very polite. Although pupils' behaviour around the school is good, their attentiveness and responsiveness in lessons is sometimes only satisfactory.

Pupils readily adopt safe practices, and appreciate the adult supervision outside the classroom. Pupils understand well what it means to contribute to the community, for example through their fundraising for charities and the 'buddy' arrangements in the infant playground. The school council has used its budget to improve playground equipment. The Credit Union (a savings club) helps to develop pupils' financial understanding. The good social and workplace skills that pupils develop at school contribute well to their future economic well-being, as do their above-average standards in literacy and numeracy by the end of Year 6. Attendance is above average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers plan well to meet pupils' needs. They clarify lesson objectives with pupils who therefore know what they are expected to learn. New vocabulary is explained well. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils should achieve, and organise their learning well. As a result, teachers make accurate judgements about the success of the learning.

Where teaching is particularly successful, pupils engage very well with their learning because they are given opportunities to explain their thinking and to work in collaborative ways. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, pupils were able to suggest various successful ways of calculating using a number line. However, there are sometimes missed opportunities to involve pupils in lessons, for example by asking them to work in pairs or groups to discuss answers to teachers' questions.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

Provision for the progressive development of skills in literacy and numeracy is good in Years 3 to 6, and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Information and communication technology (ICT) is now better developed so that pupils have improved opportunities to apply their computer skills in other areas of the curriculum. The good link with Ealing College further extends pupils' ICT experience. There is good support for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and for those learning English as an additional language. The school's participation in the Black Children's Achievement Programme provides additional support in basic skills for these pupils.

Good specialist provision is made across the school for music and for physical education and games. The school librarian provides good input for all pupils on reading and library skills.

French is taught in Years 3 and 4, and there are plans to extend this to other classes. Curriculum partnerships foster pupils' creativity through work with professionals, such as artists, sculptors and gardeners. Themed weeks, for instance science or art weeks, and Black History Month, offer pupils new perspectives through visitors and visits to places of interest. The extra-curricular programme offers an excellent range of clubs and sporting activities.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides excellent care for pupils, for instance through the nurture group, which is organised by the learning mentor. Safeguarding arrangements and child protection procedures are secure. Risk assessments with regard to site use, excursions and individual pupils are robust. Procedures to monitor pupils' attendance are rigorous. The breakfast club provides a good start to the day for those who attend it.

The marking of pupils' work includes advice about improvement. The targets in pupils' exercise books are set in conjunction with pupils and their parents. However, there is no consistent way in which teachers record for pupils that targets have been reached. As a result, teachers' tracking of pupils' targets is not as rigorous as it could be.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Senior leaders and managers have set a clear direction for the improvement of the school. They check the quality of planning and teaching, and monitor pupils' learning through scrutinising samples of their work. Present information enables leaders to monitor the progress of individual pupils, but not that of particular pupil groups, such as boys and girls. Senior leaders are already aware of this and are taking steps to improve the availability of data to inform the analysis of progress.

The school's positive ethos supports the promotion of equal opportunities particularly well. Good contributions to community cohesion are made, particularly at the levels of the school and the local community. These contributions have made the school more inclusive, and have resulted, for instance, in greater representation for minority ethnic groups on the school staff. However, cohesion at the national level is less well developed. Governors show a good understanding of their strategic role. They offer strong support to the school, but also know how to act effectively as 'critical friends'.

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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?	2
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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

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

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

<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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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?	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

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

20 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Saint Vincent Catholic Primary School, London, W3 9JR

We would like to thank all of you, and your teachers, for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you in your classrooms and talking to you. St Vincent's is a good school and a happy place for children. Many of your parents wrote to us about how much you enjoy school, and about its good features. These are the most important and positive things to say about your school.

- The school works well to make sure all the different children feel included.
- You have very good relationships with each other and with the adults, who take excellent care of you.
- Your personal development, including your behaviour, is good. You feel safe in school, make good contributions to school and community life, and your practice of healthy lifestyles is outstanding.
- You are making good progress in your learning, and by the time that you leave at the end of Year 6, you are doing better than pupils of this age in many other schools.
- The teaching in your school is good.
- The school has a good curriculum and provides you with excellent extra-curricular activities. Many of you get involved in these activities.
- The headteacher and the other school leaders do a lot of checking up, so they know what is good about your school and how to improve it.
- Most parents are very pleased with the school, but a few are less happy.

The headteacher and the other leaders have worked hard to make the school a good place for you. We have asked them to make things even better by:

- raising your standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2, so that you achieve as well as you do in Years 3 to 6
- improving the way the school tracks your progress and sets targets for you.

You can help by continuing to work hard and taking advantage of the improvements that your teachers will be making. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Chris Grove

Lead Inspector