

St Ignatius RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102144
Local Authority	Haringey
Inspection number	323592
Inspection dates	21–22 January 2009
Reporting inspector	John Collins

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)	412
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	Dr John Anani
Headteacher	Mr Con Bonner
Date of previous school inspection	22 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	St Ann's Road Tottenham London N15 6ND
Telephone number	020 8800 2771
Fax number	020 8802 7156

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This London Catholic school is larger than average. The majority of pupils come from the boroughs of Haringey and Hackney. The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals, those whose first language is not English, and those from minority ethnic groups, are much higher than normal. More pupils than normal start and leave the school at times other than usual. There are 31 languages spoken by the school community at present, with many pupils starting school with little or no English. The proportion of pupils with moderate learning difficulties is broadly average. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision is in a part-time Nursery and two-form entry Reception classes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school has successfully overcome notable barriers to learning posed by the personal circumstances of many of the pupils. Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well regardless of gender or background. Attainment by the more able pupils however is well below average for pupils of similar ability. They make less progress than they should because they are not consistently challenged in lessons. The school recognises that more needs to be done in setting individual targets for all groups of pupils so that they have a clearer understanding of what they must do in order to improve. Teaching is good and the improvement in behaviour has led to higher expectations in both pupils and staff. Pupils with learning difficulties are well catered for through outstanding partnerships with the local community and local authority support agencies.

Children start school with skills that are markedly below those expected, especially in language, social skills, and mathematical calculation. A high proportion start with little or no English. Good provision and teaching in the EYFS give children a good start, although, by the end of Reception, their skills in language and mathematics are still well below those usually found. Progress continues to be good for the majority of pupils in Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 6 achievement is good. Progress by pupils with moderate learning, language and communication difficulties is also good. The school promotes community cohesion well through the ways it celebrates its cultural diversity. It has strong links with its local community and a very large majority of parents support its work. One parent wrote, 'St Ignatius is indeed a good school'. Many are pleased with the progress their children are making. The good links the school has with other local and regional schools, and with other organisations, make a strong contribution to the personal development and well-being of all pupils. They are developing a good sense of a healthy lifestyle. In one Year 3 lesson on choosing healthy foods, one pupil remarked that 'they make you good inside!'

The improvement in behaviour, consistently good teaching and a good curriculum have all helped to bring about a secure and welcoming learning environment. Pupils say they feel safe and enjoy coming to school. One parent wrote, 'My daughter provides an enthusiastic commentary on all the interesting things she has learnt each day'. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments are outstanding. Pupils show a high level of concern for others, to whom they offer help and support, especially those new to the school or those who do not speak English.

The school is led well by the headteacher, enthusiastically supported by his senior leadership team. They are aware, however, of the need to develop the leadership roles of other managers and governors so that they have a closer focus on raising standards and achievement. At present the school has good systems of assessment and tracking. Nevertheless, the data are not always used to best advantage in building up a clear picture of how well children are progressing from their starting points.

The successful tackling of the issue from the last inspection, a more stable staff, good teaching and learning, and good achievement show the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start school with generally low levels of skills and knowledge which fluctuate from year to year due to mobility and the proportions of those for whom English is an additional language. Nevertheless, most children make good progress from these starting points, although many do not reach the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1. Personal development is good. Clear systems exist to help children settle and become familiar with daily routines. Relationships are good and children behave well. They join in with others and respond to instructions. A suitable balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities allows children to develop independence and choose for themselves what they will do. One parent wrote, 'My son has thrived in the Nursery'. Children are well supported in their learning and engage in a wide range of interesting activities. They like to be creative. Regular learning of letters and sounds helps to develop early reading and writing. Good use is made of shared areas in the Reception classes where children engage in role play and learn about healthy options in 'Iggy's Cafand;eacute;'. The school has rightly identified that, in both the Nursery and Reception classes, outdoor areas are not fully developed to allow children to make best use of available space. Good care ensures children remain safe. Individual needs are identified early and each child's progress is noted through regular observations. However, this information is not always used to enable staff to fully measure the impact of their teaching and predict outcomes more reliably.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards, particularly for the more able pupils, by increasing the level of challenge in lessons.
- Develop the leadership role of middle leaders and governors so they have a clearer focus on raising standards and achievement.
- Improve the use of assessment and marking to build up a more accurate picture of how well all pupils make progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Attainment is above average in writing by the end of Key Stage 1 due to the whole-school focus on providing stimulating and practical writing activities. Standards are average in reading and mathematics. This represents good achievement by the majority of pupils from low starting points. More able pupils, however, do not make as much progress as they should. Standards in Key Stage 2 have fluctuated over time due to the great variations in the different groups of pupils. The latest 2008 Key Stage 2 test and assessment results show a dip from 2007 although school tracking data show that these pupils made good progress from their starting points. By the end of Year 6, standards are generally above average in English and mathematics and average in science. Good teaching and improved behaviour enable most groups of pupils to make good progress as they move through the school. However, the more able pupils are not challenged consistently enough in lessons and they do not make as much progress as they might. Pupils with moderate learning and communication difficulties, and those pupils who join the school at other than the usual times, make similar progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. All groups of pupils show a very good awareness and respect for each other's different beliefs and customs. They relate extremely well to each other and fully recognise that they are part of a culturally diverse school and local community. One pupil sums it up, 'Our school accepts everybody'. As a result, pupils work and play together very well. They excitedly engage in local projects such as the South Tottenham Festival. Behaviour is good. Pupils enthusiastically promote anti-bullying and anti-crime campaigns. Pupils mature to become confident, willingly accepting roles of responsibility. Through the work of the school council, the Litter Busters campaign and playground improvements have benefited all pupils by raising their awareness and concern for the environment. Pupils are aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and know how to remain safe. Standards they reach in literacy and numeracy are above average and prepare them well for the future world of work. Attendance is in line with national figures and pupils enjoy participating in the 'Attendance Olympics'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Most pupils make good progress because of good teaching and well-planned lessons. Good opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills are provided through the use of discussions and talking partners. Most lessons are lively and proceed at a good pace. Pupils enjoy the activities planned for them, although sometimes these activities are not always sufficiently closely matched to the abilities of different groups. For example, in many classes the challenge for the more able pupils does not always help them to achieve as well as they should, and their progress slows. Behaviour is managed well and relationships are good. Pupils readily celebrate the success of each other, raising their self-esteem and confidence. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed to give good support to a range of small groups of pupils with learning difficulties, enabling them to contribute positively to lessons. Teachers and support staff are ambitious for their pupils and ensure they make the fastest progress in gaining fluency in English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned to meet both the academic and personal needs of most pupils. It is enhanced by a rich variety of visitors and visits, including a residential visit for Year 5. Special curriculum events such as Black History Month and themes such as anti-bullying and refugees 'weeks' provide good opportunities for personal development. Cultural awareness is strong and promoted well through pupils' knowledge and understanding of the different ethnic communities of the school. Pupils are able to attend a range of after school clubs providing opportunities for healthy exercise. The school has won the Activemark award in recognition of its promotion of pupils' health and exercise through physical education, swimming and a number of sporting clubs. Working independently or in pairs or small groups contributes well to pupils' social development. However, the school is aware of the need to develop further the use of literacy, numeracy and information technology skills in other areas of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Personal guidance is good. New pupils settle quickly and happily into the school throughout the year because of good induction procedures. Arrangements for health and safety, safeguarding and risk assessments are robust and promote a safe and supportive learning environment. Pupils are confident that there is always an adult they can turn to if they have a problem. Support for vulnerable pupils is strong as their needs are swiftly identified and their progress is carefully tracked. Pupils with moderate learning and communication difficulties receive good support tailored to their needs. The school works very well with outside agencies to find the best support for these pupils and their families. However, most pupils are vague about their targets and marking is unclear as to what they need to do in order to improve. More rigorous monitoring of pupils' performance to improve standards is beginning to be established but is not consistently well implemented throughout the school. The school does all it can to improve attendance and punctuality.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The impact of the good senior leadership and management is evident in St Ignatius' smooth running and in its harmonious community. The school is rightly proud of its inclusive ethos, reflected in pupils' good progress, their good behaviour and their enjoyment of learning. Governance is satisfactory. Governors visit the school regularly and are committed to helping it improve and are beginning to develop their role and confidence in holding the school to account. The school has an honest view of its strengths and areas for development, for example, improving provision for the more able pupils and developing more effective assessment systems. However, a number of leaders are new to their roles and their impact on pupils' achievements is not yet fully realised.

Strong links help to promote community cohesion well. Partnerships with local secondary schools and external support agencies enable the school to successfully promote a sense of belonging within the local community among its pupils and their families.

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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?	1
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 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?	2
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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	3

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	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	3
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**

04 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Ignatius RC Primary School, London, N15 6ND

Thank you for being such a big help to us when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. Your behaviour was good and you certainly enjoy your time at school.

Here are some of the things your school does well.

- Many of you are reaching higher standards and making good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- The headteacher and senior teachers are doing a good job of running the school.
- You get on well together and make a very good contribution to your local community.
- The school takes good care of you.

Here are some things your school could do better.

- Raise standards even more by making sure those of you who find learning easy are challenged all the time in lessons.
- Help the other teachers and governors to be more involved in helping you to improve your standards.
- Improve marking and the ways in which your teachers assess how well you are doing so you understand better what you have to do to improve.

You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard and enjoy your time in school. Remember, ask your teachers if you have a problem; they will help you to make even better progress than you make now.

Good luck in the future.

Yours faithfully

John Collins

Lead Inspector