

St Gildas' Catholic Junior School

Oakington Way, London, N8 9EP

Inspection dates 26–27 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, supported by other leaders and governors, is bringing about improvement to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, after a decline following the previous inspection.
- Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, attainment is rising.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and enabling pupils to make good progress. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and plan interesting activities that inspire them to learn.
- Teachers use questions very well to consolidate pupils' learning and deepen their understanding.
- The range of subjects and activities is exciting and engaging for pupils. It provides a wide range of opportunities, for example in sport, art and music.
- The headteacher has a clear vision to improve the school and has developed a staff team with high aspirations for pupils.
- Governors are astute and committed to the school. They have played an important part in checking that it is improving.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They display great enthusiasm for learning, are very proud of their school and are unfailingly polite and well behaved.
- The arrangements to keep pupils safe and secure are outstanding. Pupils feel very safe at the school.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. As a result, it is a very harmonious community and pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching is not yet enabling all pupils to make rapid progress.
- Occasionally, the work set for the most able pupils is not hard enough to enable them to reach the highest standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The quality of teachers' marking is variable in the extent that it enables pupils to improve their work and provides opportunities for pupils to respond.
- Leaders and teachers are not using the information they collect about pupils' progress systematically to check that all groups of pupils are making good progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in all eight classes in the school. A number of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. They also looked at some sessions where small groups of pupils were being supported.
- The team looked at pupils' work in books and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors talked to pupils in lessons, on the playground and in the dining room. An inspector also talked to a group of pupils more formally.
- Interviews were held with senior and middle leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, learning mentor, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of school documentation, including information about pupils' progress, the school's evaluation of its own performance and its plans for improvement.
- The team considered the 126 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and talked to parents at the beginning of the school day. Inspectors also considered the views of staff, expressed in 20 responses to a questionnaire.

Inspection team

Graham Lee, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Lynne Kauffman

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Gildas' is a junior school which has a similar number of pupils to the average-sized primary school.
- The school serves a predominantly Catholic community and pupils come from a wide area beyond the school's immediate locality.
- Most pupils are of minority ethnic origin and more than a third speak English as an additional language. The most significant groups in size are those from White British, Other White European, Black African and Black Caribbean backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special education needs is a little below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils entitled to funding through the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding provided to support, in this school, pupils who are eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The current headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The governors of the school run a breakfast club for pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding to enable all groups of pupils to make rapid progress by ensuring that:
 - work is always hard enough for the most able pupils to enable them to reach the highest possible standards in reading, writing and mathematics
 - teachers' marking always helps pupils to improve their work and gives them sufficient opportunities to respond in order to correct misunderstandings and practise their skills.
- Improve the use of the information held by leaders and teachers to ensure that all groups of pupils make accelerated progress and that this information is used to plan for the future.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has high aspirations for pupils in the school. With the support of staff, governors and, increasingly, senior and middle leaders, she is driving improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement after a dip in the school's performance following the previous inspection. At the same time the high quality of pupils' behaviour and personal development has been maintained, supported by strong levels of attendance.
- The deputy headteacher and subject leaders are playing an increasingly important role in bringing about improvements to the quality of teaching in the school. Regular checks of teaching quality and better use of information about pupils' progress are producing consistently good teaching. This is allied to more robust systems for performance management, which links teachers' pay rewards very closely to the progress of pupils.
- Provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is now better because of very effective leadership. The special educational needs coordinator has quickly identified pupils' needs and ensured that the right support is in place for each one. As a result, progress is improving.
- Leaders and teachers are using information about the progress of individual pupils more astutely to ensure that any potential underachievement is identified at an early stage. Consequently, self-evaluation is accurate. However, the progress of groups of pupils is not yet being analysed in a way that readily and clearly identifies strengths and weaknesses to inform planning for the future.
- The additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has not closed the gaps between the performance of these pupils and others in the school in the past. However, in the current year it is being used effectively to support these pupils through specific programmes. Also, the learning mentor is helping these pupils overcome some of the barriers to their learning. As a result, the achievement of these pupils is improving.
- The curriculum is engaging and exciting for pupils. It develops their literacy and numeracy skills well and provides a wide range of opportunities in subjects such as art, sport and music. For example, a link-up with a local art gallery has involved pupils displaying their art work at the gallery and visiting for an official 'showing'.
- The school's curriculum and values also promote pupils' social, moral and spiritual development extremely well. The school is very outward looking and is involved in the local community and supports a number of charities. The school has a well-thought-out policy to ensure that it promotes British values. Consequently, pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The primary sports funding has been used effectively to provide additional opportunities for pupils to take advantage of specialist coaching in sports such as football, cricket, tennis and athletics. It is also enabling the skills of teachers to be developed. These activities, both in and out of school, are well attended and are improving the health of pupils, although the strategies to measure impact are not yet fully in place.
- The local authority has provided very good support and challenge to the headteacher and governors to improve the school. This has been supported by effective training where necessary.
- The safeguarding of pupils is of the highest priority for all adults in the school. The policies and procedures fully meet statutory requirements and are evident in all aspects of the school's work.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are astute, highly committed and know the school well. With the support of the local authority they have become more effective in challenging leaders to improve the school following the dip in its performance. They understand how to use data to monitor pupils' progress. They know how the school's performance compares with that of other schools nationally and how the information collected by the school about pupils' progress is leading to improvements. Governors are very clear about the quality of teaching and how underperformance has been tackled. They ensure that systems for performance management for the headteacher and other staff are robust and reward only effective performance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The highest standards of behaviour have been maintained since the previous inspection.
- Pupils are extremely enthusiastic learners. They enjoy the interesting activities they are provided with and always strive to do their best. They respond extremely well to their teachers and other adults. They apply themselves equally well when working on their own and in pairs or groups. Even a slight lack of

concentration is quite unusual.

- The school's systems to encourage good behaviour are understood by pupils and applied consistently by staff, who have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. Consequently, poor behaviour is extremely rare and there have been no exclusions for a number of years.
- Around the narrow corridors and staircases of the school's unique premises, on the small playground and in the dining room, pupils' behaviour is impressive. Pupils are unfailingly polite and courteous to one another, adults and visitors.
- Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds get on extremely well together and, as a consequence, the school is a happy and harmonious community.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their school and look very smart in their uniforms. They take their responsibilities, for example as school councillors and as ambassadors for St Gildas', very seriously.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The safeguarding of pupils is of paramount importance to everybody at the school, and procedures to keep pupils safe, whether in school or when they are involved in activities elsewhere, are exemplary.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of different kinds of bullying, for example in relation to race and differing beliefs. They also know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, for instance, when using the internet.
- Pupils, overwhelmingly, say that they all get on very well together and that there are very few instances of bullying. School records confirm that this is the case. Pupils also feel extremely safe at St Gildas' and have great confidence in the adults around them to deal with any issues that arise.
- The school's systems to encourage good attendance are effective, as indicated by the above-average levels of attendance that have been maintained over a number of years, even though some families travel from quite far afield.
- The vast majority of parents responding to Parent View agree that their children are safe at school, that pupils are well behaved and that the school deals effectively with bullying.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good and enables pupils to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. It is also successful in enabling pupils to apply their developing skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to other aspects of their learning.
- Following a dip in the school's performance after the previous inspection, the headteacher identified that teaching was not consistent in terms of quality and expectations throughout the school. This has now been fully addressed.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' work and behaviour and have good relationships with their class. They provide pupils with activities which interest and motivate them. Consequently, pupils know what is required of them and respond well to the challenge.
- Teachers routinely share the purpose of lessons with pupils, which sets a purposeful framework for learning. Planning for the needs of pupils of different abilities has improved, although occasionally the work for the most able pupils is not hard enough or they do not get on to the harder work quickly enough.
- A strong feature of the teaching is questioning, which is used very effectively to check pupils' understanding and deepen their learning. In the Year 4 classes, for example, pupils were challenged to discuss their ideas about a story based on very limited information. Skilful questioning probed pupils' understanding and engaged them in quite a sophisticated debate which developed their critical thinking very well.
- Teaching assistants make an important contribution to the quality of learning, especially for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They work closely with teachers so that they are clear about what pupils are expected to achieve during lessons.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and conscientiously and follow the school's guidelines. However, the extent to which the marking helps pupils to improve and gives them the opportunity to respond remains variable.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic about their teachers. One told the inspectors how her teacher 'had helped her become a writer'. Most parents responding to Parent View also believe that their children are well taught.

The achievement of pupils**is good**

- Pupils of all abilities are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school. Published information shows that, since the previous inspection, there had been a dip in pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6. However, better teaching over the past year has led to accelerated progress, and pupils' attainment is rising throughout the school and is above expected levels at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils develop good comprehension skills and enjoy reading a wide range of books for pleasure and information. They also learn to write well for many different purposes and have opportunities to use these skills in other subjects, for example religious education. Their writing is underpinned by a good understanding of grammar, spelling and punctuation, and standards are especially high in these aspects by the end of Year 6.
- Mathematical understanding is developed well as pupils move through the school. They have a good understanding of number and other mathematical concepts and apply these well in their learning. For example, more-able pupils in Year 6 were able to apply their knowledge of ratio and proportion in converting miles to kilometres with confidence.
- In recent years, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs had not made as much progress as others. However, the new special needs coordinator has identified their needs very precisely and ensured that they get the right support tailored to their individual requirements. As a result, their progress is speeding up to be in line with that of other pupils.
- The most able have done as well as similar pupils nationally in recent years, as reflected in the proportions reaching the higher Levels 5 and 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. However in the current Year 6 a high proportion of pupils are working at these levels in reading and mathematics. Occasionally in lessons, the most able are not provided with work which taxes them sufficiently.
- Disadvantaged pupils have not achieved as well as other pupils in mathematics and reading. While gaps at the end of Year 6 closed for these pupils in 2014, they did not attain as well as others. In mathematics, they were two terms behind other pupils in the school and a year behind others nationally. In reading, the gaps were a year with others in the school and three and a half terms with others nationally. In writing, however, pupils' attainment was broadly in line with that of other pupils in the school and nationally.
- Current school information, however, shows that gaps are closing rapidly. There are no significant gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 and others. Throughout the school, these pupils are now making similar, and sometimes better, progress to others.
- Over the last two years, girls have outperformed boys by the end of Year 6. However, this is no longer the case and throughout the school there are no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls. Similarly, pupils from different ethnic backgrounds achieve equally well, and those speaking English as an additional language achieve as well as first-language users.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	102151
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	444284

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Price
Headteacher	Gillian Hood
Date of previous school inspection	22–23 June 2009
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