

# St Aloysius Roman Catholic Infant School

28 Phoenix Road, Somers Town, Camden, London, NW1 1TA

**Inspection dates** 12–13 June 2013

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Children in the Nursery and Reception make good progress from low starting points. They are well cared for and are happy.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress and achieve national average standards by the time they leave school, especially in reading and writing.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and some is outstanding. Teachers plan effective learning opportunities based on the needs of pupils. Other adults are skilful in ensuring all pupils do well.
- The subjects taught and additional activities promote pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Parents are very positive about the school and value the staff's support for their children
- Behaviour is outstanding. The school is a safe and inclusive community where pupils feel valued and develop positive attitudes.
- The headteacher is a highly effective leader. Other leaders also make a strong contribution to raising achievement and all staff are fully supportive because of the team approach which exists within the school.
- Governors are knowledgeable and provide support and challenge as needed. They are ambitious and active in extending the range of opportunities for pupils.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not yet achieve as well in mathematics as they do in English despite some recent improvements in pupils' progress.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not always clearly show what pupils need to do to improve.
- Teachers do not have sufficient opportunities to share the range of outstanding features to increase the proportion of outstanding practice across the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, seven of which were joint lesson observations with senior leaders. Additional intervention groups were also observed, including a music session. Inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at pupils' work in their exercise books.
- Inspectors met with pupils and talked with them about their work. Meetings were also held with middle leaders, three members of the governing body including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority.
- Documentation covering safeguarding, the management of performance of staff, records of behaviour and safety, attendance, checks of pupils' attainment and progress were reviewed.
- Inspectors took account of 10 responses from parents and carers to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own parent survey and 18 questionnaires from staff. An inspector also talked to parents and carers informally during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Howard Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Patricia Underwood

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-size infant school.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is one Nursery on a separate site and two Reception classes.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support from the pupil premium funding, which is the extra government support for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from service families, is well above average and in this school relates to pupils who qualify for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs at school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school has been awarded the Stephen Lawrence Education Standard which promotes inclusion and race equality.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the proportion of outstanding teaching to increase the proportion of pupils who exceed the levels expected for their age, especially in mathematics, by:
  - ensuring teachers' marking has a consistently sharper focus on guiding pupils on what they need to do to improve to progress to the next level in their learning
  - increasing the proportion of pupils to exceed the levels expected for their age, especially in mathematics
  - sharing more widely the outstanding practice in teaching that exists within the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The achievement of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is improving over time. Children start in the Nursery with skills and knowledge well below those expected for their age. Because of the strong emphasis on their social and language development, children make good progress.
- Good progress continues in Reception. Children who have been with the school for two years enter Year 1 well equipped to tackle learning in Key Stage 1. A growing number reaches levels above this in social development and aspects of learning in language and problem solving. Children joining the school in the Reception Year take longer to catch up, but make good progress.
- At the end of Year 2, attainment in reading and writing is broadly in line with the national average. Standards in mathematics are weaker, and positive steps have been taken to raise pupils' achievement, and progress is now improving.
- Pupils in both Years 1 and 2 make good progress overall. From their different starting points, school evidence shows current pupils are on track to achieve well at the end of the summer term. Pupils from different ethnic groups and those speaking English as an additional language make equally good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Additional adults are well trained and skilled to enable these pupils to have the confidence to succeed. Their needs are identified quickly and parents and carers comment how beneficial the care their children receive is.
- Pupils who receive extra help through the pupil premium did not attain standards similar to other pupils in 2012. They were seven months behind their peers in reading and mathematics and eight months in writing. Inspection evidence shows these pupils are now making faster progress in these subjects.
- In the Year 1 2012 phonics screening check (linking letters and sounds), the proportion of pupils performing in line with national expectations was below average. The school has correctly identified this gap as a continuing priority for improvement.
- Pupils develop good speaking skills. Older pupils use a range of vocabulary and enjoy talking and writing about the books they read, for example those written by Roald Dahl.

### The quality of teaching is good

- In the Nursery, children enjoy the stimulating learning environment. Tasks are well matched to the needs of children, who respond positively to questions within a calm setting. The outside is used well, as seen in one session where a planned experiment created a wonderful sense of anticipation as children observed a spectacular eruption.
- In Reception, children are purposeful in their learning. For example, during activities based around recycling, children were highly motivated and remained engaged. Adults are also imaginative in the range of techniques used to extend children's understanding, as seen in the use of a puppet and song during a session on 'double numbers'.
- The quality of teaching is equally as strong in Years 1 and 2. Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive so that pupils become confident in their learning. Teachers are good at modelling the use of language, as demonstrated in one Year 2 lesson where the teacher used these skills to inspire pupils in their writing.
- Teachers use their subject knowledge to ensure work is sufficiently challenging. For example, in a Year 1 class, pupils had to develop their ideas in an open-ended task based around New Zealand. While, during one numeracy lesson, in Year 2, teaching was effective in requiring pupils to apply their understanding by using scales accurately within a practical setting.
- Additional adults are skilled in ensuring equality of access to all learning opportunities for pupils.

They use questioning to make pupils think more deeply about their learning. Their contribution during whole class activities leads to good progress for those pupils who need extra help.

- Pupils value the recognition of their achievement provided in teachers' marking. However, while these written comments rightly celebrate pupils' success in a particular activity, they do not always provide enough detail on how pupils can take steps to further improve the quality of their work.
- The quality of learning is consistently good and some is outstanding. Typically, the more effective teachers plan for the needs of all pupils and provide opportunities for them to reflect on their learning and adapt activities in response to this. However, the range of outstanding practice seen across the school is not consistently evident to bring about more outstanding achievement.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Pupils have very positive attitudes toward their learning. In the Nursery and Reception, children play and work well together within calm yet stimulating settings. Pupils in Key Stage 1 want to do well and happily respond to the encouragement they are given when their work is more challenging.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is exemplary. Older pupils are happy to take on responsibilities, for example as play buddies, whilst others share in decision making with governors, for example, discussing which type of watches best promote the telling time.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school. They know about different forms of bullying and that there is always an adult they can speak to if they have any worries. They know how to keep themselves safe when using computers. Incidents of racism are rare and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated in the school.
- This is an inclusive school community. Pupils who come from a variety of ethnicities and backgrounds share in the range of events that take place across the school. A particularly strong feature is the daily morning prayers, attended by a number of parents and carers, and in which both staff and children take part.
- The school responds effectively to pupils' emotional needs and development. The care shown by staff is seen in their sensitive approach and how this inspires pupils to be more confident in expressing their ideas and working together. This has had a marked impact on behaviour over time.
- Attendance has improved, and is now average, and punctuality is good. The school has in place systems in encouraging pupils in their attendance.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Strong leadership and management have brought about improvements in pupils' achievement. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is ably supported by her deputy. There is a strong senior leadership team and all staff are fully committed to the well-being of pupils.
- Leaders check on the progress made by pupils. Outcomes in pupils' standards are used when considering salary progression which is monitored by the governing body. Subject leaders of English and mathematics regularly check on the quality of learning in these subjects and coordinators for the Early Years Foundation Stage lead their areas well.
- The school has ensured the accuracy of assessing the quality of pupils' performance. Staff work closely with other local schools to agree standards and check their judgments on achievement.
- Support for pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs is managed effectively. The pupil premium funding is used to good effect too, for example in providing therapy through drama. Consequently, these pupils make progress equal to their peers and have every opportunity to become successful.
- Self-evaluation is well developed and checks on the quality of teaching are linked to pupils' progress. Teachers are reflective on their practice and say that training focuses on those areas

they wish to develop. However, this is sometimes constrained as the range of outstanding practice across the school is not always considered to ensure more outstanding teaching.

- The local authority has supported the school well with advice and guidance, for example in developing the role of additional adults within the classroom. It recognises this is a good school.
- The subjects taught are planned to develop pupils' progression in their understanding. Pupils have opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across a range of subjects, for example during a week of activities the focus was on mathematics. Provision for science is being further developed through a local partnership. Displays celebrate pupils' achievement well.
- Provision for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplary. This reflects the school's strong Christian values. The school is rightly proud to have received an award in recognition of the role it plays within the community. The provision for music is strong and pupils enjoy the opportunities to sing in large public venues.
- Safeguarding requirements are fully in place and procedures are well established.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The Chair of the Governing Body has a strong sense of how to develop the school further and the governors effectively support her in this. Together, they are fully involved in the life of the school and do not tolerate discrimination. They monitor the achievement of pupils and ask challenging questions. They have a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaker aspects of the school. They are active in extending the quality of provision, for example as seen in science. They check the quality of teaching and performance management and ensure teachers' pay is linked to pupils' progress. The governors have developed their competency through training and understand how to use data to compare the school with others nationally. They make sure the pupil premium funding is being used well and that it is leading to improvements in achievement for these pupils.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100038
<b>Local authority</b>	Camden
<b>Inspection number</b>	412556

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	203
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Margaret Moran
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jackie Cox
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2–3 December 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7387 3551
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