

# St Elizabeth Catholic Primary School

Bonner Road, Bethnal Green, London E2 9JY

## Inspection dates

8–9 February 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The strong and determined leadership of the headteacher, well supported by leaders and governors, has successfully improved the school since the previous inspection.
- Governors hold leaders to account for the progress pupils make. They know the school's strengths and have an accurate understanding of what needs to improve further.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils enjoy their learning and make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They are well prepared for the move to secondary school.
- Children enjoy themselves in the early years because teachers make learning fun. Children make good progress from their starting points as a result of consistently strong teaching.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well throughout the school. Leaders monitor pupils' progress carefully and are quick to address any gaps in pupils' learning.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average.
- Parents are pleased with the school's work to keep their children safe and well cared for. Arrangements for safeguarding are effective and pupils say they feel safe.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and in the playground. Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively. The school is a happy and harmonious community where relationships between pupils and adults are positive.
- The school's work to support vulnerable pupils and their families is a strength of the school. All staff promote pupils' personal development and well-being very effectively.
- Although pupils make good progress in mathematics overall, not enough pupils attain at the highest levels. Teaching does not consistently provide pupils with opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in a range of contexts. There are too few opportunities for pupils to solve problems and develop reasoning skills before they reach Year 6.
- Leaders have strengthened procedures to monitor pupils' progress in English and mathematics. However, assessment arrangements in science and the other curriculum subjects are less robust.
- Occasionally, the support from teaching assistants does not match the very high quality seen in most classes.
- Sometimes, teachers miss opportunities to provide the right levels of challenge in lessons, particularly for the most able pupils.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
  - all teachers provide sufficient challenge to pupils in lessons, especially the most able pupils, so that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable
  - teachers provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to solve problems and develop reasoning skills in a range of contexts so that a greater proportion achieve the higher scores in mathematics
  - all teaching assistant support is as strong as the best by sharing the good and better practice that exists within the school.
- Further improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - middle leaders develop robust assessment procedures in order to check pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in science and the wider curriculum.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Together with the deputy headteacher, the headteacher has moved the school forward significantly since the previous inspection. They have been unwavering in their determination to do whatever it takes to raise standards for all pupils.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness. They evaluate the school's strengths effectively and use well-thought-out development plans to implement ongoing improvements. The headteacher has the firm support of all leaders, who share her vision for the school.
- The headteacher has strengthened leadership at all levels. Middle leaders know their subjects well and confidently support their colleagues to provide strong teaching across the curriculum. Senior leaders have implemented effective school-wide initiatives and developments to improve outcomes for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have improved the way in which teaching and learning are monitored. They know what constitutes effective teaching and follow a well-planned programme to check that all pupils receive consistently good teaching.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a secure understanding of how well pupils achieve throughout the school. Together with senior leaders, they have improved assessment arrangements to track pupils' progress in English and mathematics. However, leaders acknowledge that arrangements for checking how well pupils achieve in science and other curriculum subjects are not as robust.
- In all year groups, pupils enjoy an exciting curriculum that allows them to learn through meaningful topics and themes. The current curriculum has recently been revised and subject leaders are always looking for ways to improve the experiences pupils receive. Pupils speak positively about how teachers make learning fun, such as through drama, educational visits and whole-school competitions in different subjects.
- The activities that take place beyond the classroom are a strength of the school. Pupils and parents all compliment the array of enrichment opportunities available to them. For example, pupils enjoy arts and crafts, football, choir and poetry. Year 5 pupils are particularly proud of their classmates for learning to play the ukulele so well.
- Leaders ensure that the additional pupil premium funding has an impact on pupils' learning. The leader responsible for the achievement of disadvantaged pupils has made a real difference to how well these pupils achieve. He has worked with determination with class teachers to ensure that each pupil has whatever it takes to enable them to attend well, engage in their learning, make good progress and feel valued. Pupil progress meetings are well focused and address pupils' individual needs. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress throughout the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The additional primary sports funding is used effectively. Leaders have revised how sport and physical education is provided and there are many opportunities for pupils to be active and enjoy sports throughout the day, including at lunchtimes and after

school. Pupils have a say in what activities take place and thoroughly enjoy new and different opportunities, such as fencing and archery.

- The school has a very special ethos. Pupils are proud of their school and say that it 'feels like a big family'. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in all parts of the school.
- Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively. During the inspection, the school celebrated its annual 'international day'. During a special assembly, pupils performed their own poetry, entitled 'this is our vision', to celebrate diversity. Pupils offered reflections in a range of international languages with pride.
- Pupils have many opportunities for reflection. Teachers promote pupils' spiritual development well. In religious education sessions pupils learn about their own faiths and those of others. During the inspection, pupils reflected on the importance of prayer and what it means to them. As one pupil said, 'It is important to come together for worship. It makes us all feel a part of our school.'
- Pupils know that any form of discrimination is not tolerated at this school. Teachers provide pupils with regular opportunities to learn about the world around them. Leaders promote equality successfully in all aspects of the school's work.
- Parents enjoy many opportunities to come into school and find out about their children's learning. They are complimentary about how much the school has improved since the previous inspection and are supportive of the school's work. As one parent said, 'This is a great school and if my children are happy, then I am happy'.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governance has improved significantly. Governors acknowledge that at the time of the previous inspection, they needed to improve the rigour with which they held school leaders to account. Since then, they have undertaken an external review of their work, attended training and strengthened procedures to improve their effectiveness. Governors evaluate their own work through a well-structured development plan.
- Governors understand the school well and are clear about how the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved over the past two years. Governors hold leaders to account and while continuing to support the school well, have increased the challenge on school leaders to explain and justify the impact of their actions.
- The governing body has a strong skillset and governors take their responsibilities seriously. Governors make regular visits to the school to assess the effectiveness of their areas of responsibility. In meetings, governors ask questions about pupils' achievement, particularly if they notice any gaps or discrepancies, and insist that leaders tell them what they will do to address these.
- Governors fulfil their statutory duties. They monitor the use of the pupil premium funding closely and have an accurate understanding of how well disadvantaged pupils achieve. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
- Governors are highly supportive of the school's leadership team and share the headteacher's determination to continually improve the school.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of keeping pupils safe in the school. All adults spoken to during the inspection acknowledge that it is a shared responsibility to ensure that pupils are safe and feel safe. Procedures for recording and reporting concerns about a child's welfare are robust.
- The school works in collaboration with other professionals where necessary to ensure that all safeguarding concerns are dealt with promptly and rigorously. The pre-employment suitability checks that are undertaken on staff meet requirements and the single central record is checked routinely by the headteacher and the designated safeguarding governor.
- The designated safeguarding leader ensures that all staff are aware of the school's context in relation to safeguarding and that all training is up to date and reflects the most recent government guidance. For example, staff understand why the 'Prevent' duty is important and the part they play in protecting pupils from the dangers associated with extremism and radicalisation.
- Leaders and teachers help pupils to understand the importance of keeping themselves safe. For example, through the curriculum and in special assemblies, pupils learn how to stay safe when they are using the internet. Leaders regularly provide parents with information about safeguarding, for example, during workshops and in newsletters.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Pupils enjoy their learning because teachers make lessons fun and exciting. Since the previous inspection, leaders have improved the quality of teaching throughout the school so that it is consistently good or better.
- Senior leaders work closely with teachers to deliver good-quality learning experiences for pupils in every year group. A bespoke training programme supports teachers to improve their practice and reflect on what helps pupils to learn effectively.
- Reading is a strength of the school. Pupils enjoy reading and from a young age show a keen interest in different authors and texts. Pupils are taught how to use phonics to read new words and use this strategy well when they read independently. The literacy leaders work well together to ensure that the teaching of reading throughout the school is of good quality. For example, they have overhauled the way in which group reading is taught so that all teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to discuss texts and answer questions to develop their comprehension and inference skills.
- Leaders have successfully improved the teaching of writing throughout the school. The strong focus on engaging boys in writing has been very effective. For example, the school has a resident poet who supports pupils to develop strong literacy skills through the medium of performance poetry. Displays around the school provide effective opportunities for pupils to see high-quality written work in a range of contexts.
- Pupils have opportunities to write at length in a range of contexts. Work in pupils' religious education books, for example, shows that pupils write for a purpose and

transfer their literacy skills well in different contexts. Writing targets are fully embedded so that pupils are clear about what is expected of them.

- The teaching of mathematics has also improved since the previous inspection, with a higher proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards at the end of each key stage. However, leaders acknowledge that pupils do not all have sufficient opportunities to solve problems, develop reasoning skills or apply their mathematical knowledge in a range of contexts. Although these aspects of mathematics are stronger in the early years and Year 6, they are not consistently well taught in all year groups.
- Teachers have worked hard to improve the quality feedback that is given to help pupils improve their work. In line with the school's policy, teachers in all year groups ensure that pupils' next steps are identified and that these are acted upon quickly so that they make good progress in their learning. This is particularly effective in writing and mathematics.
- Spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught well throughout the school. Work in pupils' books shows that teachers routinely address spelling errors and expect pupils to use punctuation and grammar that is suitable for their age and stage of development. Teachers promote pupils' spoken English well. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, the teacher explained the importance of answering in full sentences and in Year 3 pupils made good use of the structured talk opportunities before they started to write.
- Subject leaders understand the standards pupils need to reach in each year group. They work closely with teachers to ensure that the curriculum and planned activities meet the needs of the pupils in each class. However, in some lessons teachers do not provide sufficient challenge to pupils, particularly the most able pupils, which results in some pupils not making the progress of which they are capable.
- In some classes, the quality of teaching assistant support is highly effective. However, this is not consistent across the school. Sometimes, teaching assistants do not make the most of all opportunities to extend pupils' learning, particularly during whole-class activities.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school. Pupils are confident that all adults keep them safe and help them if they are worried or upset. The school's kind and caring ethos underpins the work of all adults. As a strong team, staff promote pupils' personal development and well-being very effectively.
- The school's values teach pupils to be respectful, resilient and responsible and to build positive relationships with others. Pupils speak knowledgeably about why these are important values. As one pupil said, 'They help us to become good citizens in the future.'
- Pupils are extremely proud of their school. They relish the opportunity to talk about why the school is a special place to them and the reasons they love coming to school each day. Pupils value the wide range of learning activities that teachers plan for them

and speak of a 'family' when they talk about the way in which staff, parents and pupils work together as a community.

- Leaders have developed strong opportunities for pupils to make a difference and improve the school. For example, the 'school parliament' is a well-respected group in the school. These pupils have influenced a range of changes to the school, including improvements to the learning resources and ideas about how a 'friendship bench' would be a useful addition to the playground.
- The school's work to support pupils and families whose circumstances make them vulnerable is strong. The headteacher and her team firmly believe in the school being a community where everyone is valued. Work with outside agencies, including counsellors and other professionals, has been very effective at enabling pupils and their families to achieve success.
- The school's inclusive ethos promotes equal opportunities well. Pupils know that bullying is not tolerated and say that it happens rarely. Pupils are confident that adults deal with any incidents effectively. Pupils know why derogatory language is not acceptable and say that teachers help them to understand how to respect each other's differences.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are keen and show an enthusiasm for learning. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and take pride in what they do. For example, work in pupils' books shows they take great care with presentation and handwriting. The bright and colourful displays of pupils' work around the school exemplify the care and attention that pupils show for their learning.
- Pupils say that behaviour in the school is good. They are clear about the school rules and routines, and respond well to the whole-school procedures in place to deal with any behaviour that falls short of the high expectations set by teachers. Pupils are keen to do well and enjoy the rewards given for consistently excellent behaviour.
- Adults are positive role models. They praise pupils for their effort and good behaviour. Around the school, all adults take responsibility for promoting the high standards set by senior leaders. Consequently, there is a positive ethos where pupils feel safe and happy to learn with their friends.
- The newly refurbished playground and outdoor areas have been well received by pupils. Pupils have great fun using the new multi-use sports pitch, climbing equipment and playground markings. During unstructured times, pupils play together well. They treat their friends with respect and there are hardly any incidents of poor behaviour.
- The majority of parents agree that behaviour in the school is good. They say that their children feel safe and are well-cared for by staff. The school's records confirm that any incidents are addressed effectively.
- Attendance has improved since the previous inspection so that it is now in line with the national average. Leaders work effectively with individual families to improve the attendance of those pupils who are absent too often. The school tackles absences

rigorously. Pupils talk positively about the headteacher's drive to improve attendance and understand the importance of coming to school on time every day.

- Very occasionally, pupils become distracted and their good behaviour weakens. This is usually because they have not been given work that is sufficiently challenging quickly enough in the lesson.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Good

- The quality of teaching has improved and so have pupils' outcomes. In each year group, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Most children start in the early years with knowledge, skills and understanding that are low for their age. From these low starting points, children make good progress and are well prepared for their learning in Year 1. The proportion of children who achieved a good level of development by the end of Reception has increased each year and is now in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check was above the national average in 2016. Last year, disadvantaged pupils did not achieve as well as other pupils by the end of Year 2 in phonics. Currently, all pupils are making good progress in phonics and leaders acted quickly to ensure that phonics teaching in Year 3 is strong enough to enable pupils to catch up and achieve well in reading.
- By the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils who attained the expected standards in reading and writing in 2016 was in line with the national average, although slightly lower in mathematics. Current pupils in Year 2 are making good progress and leaders' projections for these pupils suggest an improvement again this year. The proportion of pupils who are currently working at age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics is high.
- In 2016, the Year 6 pupils made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics to reach attainment scores that were in line with the national average. However, the proportion of pupils who attained the higher standard in mathematics and writing was lower than in reading.
- The improvements to the teaching of writing are reflected in pupils' outcomes. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in writing. The proportion of pupils attaining at age-related expectations in each year group is high. Pupils transfer their writing skills to other subjects well.
- The impact of leaders' actions to improve the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils is positive, particularly in key stage 2. The school's assessment information shows that the differences between disadvantaged pupils' attainment and other pupils have diminished in reading, writing and mathematics. Currently, disadvantaged pupils in each year group make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. Leaders and teachers work closely to track the progress made by these pupils. Leaders responsible for special educational needs provision in the school take a



'whole-child approach', and decide the most appropriate actions and interventions to help each pupil achieve their best. These strategies are successful.

- The most able pupils make good progress overall. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils respond well to the challenges and extensions set by teachers. Assessment information indicates that the proportion of pupils attaining above the expected standards in each year group is rising, particularly in reading and writing. However, too few pupils attain the higher scores in mathematics. Opportunities to extend pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills are not consistently embedded throughout the school to enable more pupils to have the greater depth understanding in mathematics.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The early years is a fun and exciting place to learn and play. Children enjoy themselves from the moment they come through the doors each morning and respond extremely well to the bright and purposeful learning environments. Children are happy and settled.
- Leadership of the early years is strong. The early years leader has very high expectations for all children. She has built an effective and skilled staff team that know how important it is to give all children the best possible start to their education.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the early years is good. Adults in the early years know children well and provide a range of activities both inside the classrooms and in the outdoor area that engage children effectively.
- Children behave very well in the early years. They respond well to the positive role models of expected behaviours that all adults provide. Children develop good social and communication skills and are excited to discuss their learning. Children's personal development is well promoted. Safeguarding is effective and children are safe.
- Children show a thirst for learning. Staff ensure a good balance between adult-led tasks and child-initiated learning. Children are keen writers and opportunities to make marks for a purpose start in the Nursery. Adults promote mathematics effectively. Children identify numbers, count and use money effectively in a range of contexts, for example, on a walk to the local market where they bought fruit and vegetables.
- Adults teach phonics well and instil a love of reading in the children. Role play areas are exciting places for children to develop their creative and imagination skills.
- Staff work with parents effectively. There are many opportunities for parents to come into school to find out about their children's progress. Parents appreciate the workshops that teachers provide to help them understand how their children learn and develop.
- Children's 'learning journey' books are strong celebrations of children's progress. These, together with children's writing books, show the good progress children make from their starting points across each area of learning. The early years leader has identified that parental contributions to the 'learning journeys' is something to improve further still.
- Children make good progress in each of the areas of learning. By the time children leave Reception, they are very well prepared for Year 1.

## School details

Unique reference number	133288
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10023588

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	438
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim O'Sullivan
Headteacher	Angelina John
Telephone number	020 8980 3964
Website	<a href="http://www.stelizabeth.co.uk">www.stelizabeth.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:school@st-elizabeth.towerhamlets.sch.uk">school@st-elizabeth.towerhamlets.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	27–28 January 2015

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium funding. This is additional government funding provided for pupils who are eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

- The early years comprises a Nursery and two Reception classes. Children in the Nursery either attend in the morning or the afternoon. Children in Reception attend full time.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in 27 lessons or part-lessons, some of which were observed alongside the headteacher or deputy headteacher. They looked at work in pupils' books and on display, and spoke to pupils about their learning informally.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading, observed pupils in the playground and dining room and as they moved between lessons. Inspectors took account of the 19 responses to the online pupil survey.
- The lead inspector met with a group of pupils formally to seek their views on how well the school helps them to learn, stay safe and keep healthy.
- An inspector was accompanied by a group of Year 6 pupils on a learning walk of the school to find out about the curriculum and the range of enrichment activities available to pupils.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other leaders throughout the inspection. The lead inspector met with a group of governors and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors spoke informally to staff and the five responses to the online staff survey were evaluated.
- Inspectors scrutinised some of the school's documents relating to safeguarding, teaching and learning, and information on pupils' achievement.
- Two of the inspectors spoke with some parents informally at the start of the inspection and the 61 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were also considered.

## Inspection team

Gary Rawlings, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lando Du Plooy	Ofsted Inspector
John Parr	Ofsted Inspector

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