

St Clement Danes Church of England Primary School

Drury Lane, London, WC2B 5SU

Inspection dates

4–5 November 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils are proud of their school. Their behaviour is exemplary inside and outside classrooms. They feel very safe and have very positive attitudes toward learning.
- Children get off to a very good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they experience outstanding teaching in a stimulating and well planned environment.
- All groups of pupils, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs and those who are eligible for the pupil premium, make rapid and sustained progress through the school. School leaders make every effort to ensure that no pupil falls behind.
- Standards have risen over the past few years, especially in writing, and are above average. More pupils are now attaining the highest standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. They are well prepared for secondary school.
- Teaching is consistently good and often outstanding. Relationships with pupils are a real strength. Pupils benefit from teachers' secure subject knowledge, excellent behaviour management and regular feedback. They take heed of teachers' detailed written comments and act on them in order to improve.
- Other adults make an effective contribution to pupils' learning through support in the classroom and with small groups.
- The school provides extremely well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils experience a wide range of vibrant learning opportunities inside and outside school. There is a strong focus on creative subjects, as well as on literacy, numeracy and computing.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. They are kept well informed about school events and how well their children are learning.
- School leaders and governors have maintained a firm focus on raising standards through improving teaching and catering for the wide range of pupils' needs in the school. Governors are knowledgeable, provide effective support and challenge and hold leaders to account.
- The school is a well-established part of the local community and takes advantage of the rich cultural opportunities. It has strong links with the three local churches and has received very good support from the diocese.
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. Her drive, enthusiasm and ambition for the pupils in the school have been key to the school's improvement over the past few years. She has established a strong sense of teamwork amongst staff who are loyal and appreciate opportunities for training and development. Subject leaders make a valuable contribution to raising standards in their areas.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils of all ages engaged in a range of activities in different subjects. Most observations took place alongside the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils and looked at their written work in all classes, including records of the learning of children in the Nursery and Reception.
- The inspectors spoke to two groups of pupils and with other pupils in lessons and around the school. They listened to pupils reading and talked to them about their reading habits.
- Meetings were held with school staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and six other governors, and a representative from the diocesan board. The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 86 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, and responses to parent, staff and pupil questionnaires undertaken by the school. Inspectors also held informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day and at their coffee morning.
- Inspectors looked at a number of school documents, including: the school's own evaluation of its performance and its improvement plan; information about pupils' progress and the support given to disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs; evidence about the quality of teaching; minutes of the governing body; and records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- Inspectors also took account of the 27 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Helena McVeigh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Christina Cleugh

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Clement Danes is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school. There is one form in each year group from Reception (full-time) to Year 6, and a full-time Nursery for three to four year-olds.
- Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, with the largest group being White British, representing a quarter of all pupils. Over half the pupils speak English as an additional language, which is much higher than the national average. Many pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English when they start at St Clement Danes.
- An above-average proportion of pupils join the school at times other than the start of Reception.
- Approximately one third of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in local authority care), which is above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs supported through school action is, at 8.7%, close to the national average. Whereas 15.7% of pupils, which is twice the national average, receive support through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs.
- The headteacher provides support to a number of other local schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the in-school gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others continues to narrow.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school is extremely well led by the headteacher, who has established a culture of high expectations for staff and pupils. She has created a strong sense of team work and loyalty amongst staff who feel valued. They appreciate the opportunities they are given for training and development. 'It is a privilege to work here.' This was said by a number of members of staff.
- The deputy headteacher and other senior leaders also play an important and effective part in raising standards for all pupils by improving teaching and learning. Through regular meetings about individual pupils and analysis of their attainment and progress, staff identify those who need additional help. All pupils are valued in this highly diverse school community. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from well-organised and focused programmes of support by experienced teachers and well trained teaching assistants. The way that the school promotes equality of opportunity, fosters good relations and tackles discrimination is exemplary.
- Teachers with subject responsibilities contribute to improvements in their areas. They monitor teachers' plans, pupils' work and support colleagues in lessons and in training sessions, for example on the new National Curriculum. The school has made a good start in introducing the expectations for the new curriculum and how it will be assessed.
- Systems in the school for all aspects of its work are rigorous and well documented. There are clear expectations for teaching and behaviour management, for example, and these are applied consistently. Pupils are very aware of the expectations for behaviour and respond immediately to signals such as raising a hand during lessons and in assemblies.
- Senior leaders regularly observe all aspects of teaching and learning and take prompt and effective action when teaching falls below their expected high standards. Teachers' performance is reviewed appropriately and teachers are set challenging targets. Staff have good opportunities for training within school and elsewhere. Good use is made of the highly-rated training provided by the diocese for staff and governors.
- The local authority and diocese share their very positive view of the way the school is led and managed. Light touch support is provided by the authority. School leaders regularly seek external advice in order to seek an objective view about the school's performance, to help validate judgements and moderate teachers' assessments. The headteacher has also been asked to support a number of other schools in the area.
- The school provides pupils with a broad, balanced and rich range of subjects with a strong focus on creative activities. Parents praise the school's 'creative curriculum' and pupils enjoy the opportunities to take part in a wide range of after-school and lunchtime clubs. Music and art feature throughout the school and pupils all learn a musical instrument. Their singing is enthusiastic and tuneful, for example during assemblies. Choirs and orchestras perform at prestigious venues, such as the Royal Opera House and Festival Hall.
- The way that the school promotes pupils' spiritual moral and cultural development is a real strength. The school's aims and values permeate all aspects of school life and encourage tolerance of others, responsibility and promote a good understanding of life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures and relish opportunities to help their peers, for example as playground champions or house captains. They learn about democracy through school elections onto the school council, for example, and from visits to the school by Members of Parliament.
- Parents rate the school highly. They believe it is an important part of the local community. Good efforts are made to engage all parents in the life of the school and in how to support their children at home. Parents are invited into classrooms to sit alongside their children at open days each year. Parents value the opportunity to collect their children from the playground and to be able to talk to the teachers if necessary.
- School leaders are very aware of the need to close the gap for disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium. The funds are used carefully to ensure that all eligible pupils benefit. Leaders reviewed their approach last year and, in order to close the gap more quickly, have employed a 'pupil premium' teacher. This teacher works specifically with eligible pupils, which is having a positive impact.
- Arrangements to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils are excellent and meet all statutory requirements.
- The school is using its sport funds wisely and effectively. For example, it provides a professional dancer to teach dance and to train teachers. The funds pay for pupils to use a nearby sports field so that they can participate in field sports and competitions. Additional swimming lessons are included for pupils who have not made enough progress. The school has introduced the use of a band that is worn by pupils to monitor

their movements; this has motivated pupils and staff and resulted in a greater range and quantity of movement.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body shares the headteacher's vision and high aspirations for the school. Governors provide a very effective balance of support and challenge. They include members with a good breadth of relevant experience and they ensure that all statutory responsibilities are met. They keep up to date through regular training, for example in safeguarding and performance management. They are knowledgeable about all aspects of the school, including the quality of teaching, pupils' academic performance, through the information provided by school leaders, as well as their own visits. They hold leaders effectively to account. Governors oversee the way that the performance of staff is managed and reviewed, and know how underperformance is tackled. They help to ensure that there is a clear link between pay increases and teaching performance. They set the headteacher challenging targets. Governors play an active part in the life of the school. For example, a governor takes assemblies each week and another governor provides expert advice on special educational needs. Governors have set up a panel to monitor and improve pupils' punctuality.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Parents, pupils and staff agree that behaviour and the way it is managed by staff are excellent. Pupils are proud of their school and they behave well inside and outside of classrooms. They are courteous towards each other and very quick to help those who are struggling with their learning or who are disabled. At play times, pupils take turns with the good range of equipment in the playgrounds and ensure that no one is left out.
- Pupils of all ages are enthusiastic about their learning and behave sensibly when given tasks to complete on their own or with a partner. The school sets a high standard for the way pupils dress and the way they look after their work. Presentation in books is excellent throughout the school. Pupils respond promptly to staff instructions and line up smartly, walk with heads held high and hands behind their backs.
- School records show that there are very few racist or bullying incidents; these are well recorded and follow up has been rigorous. Staff manage pupils' behaviour sensitively and consistently. There have been no fixed term or permanent exclusions in the past six years.
- The school has worked hard to improve attendance over the past few years, with much success. Attendance has improved to just over the national average, with fewer persistently poor attenders. Pupils are very aware of the importance of good attendance and the rewards on offer for classes with the best attendance.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. They say that there is very little bullying and that it is dealt with by staff very quickly. They have been taught about the various forms of bullying, including cyber bullying, through, for example, assemblies and in computing lessons. They have someone to turn to if they need help. Pupils spoke positively about being able to speak to the family practitioner and the helpful discussions they have in circle time.
- School staff work effectively with external agencies to support children and their families.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching is consistently good and often outstanding throughout the school. Relationships with pupils are a strength and there is a good level of mutual respect and trust. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work, and pupils respond well.
- Teachers tailor work and activities skilfully to meet pupils' particular needs, based on accurate assessments. Pupils who need more individual attention are taught in small groups or given one-to-one help in the classroom.
- Additional adults, such as teaching assistants, provide effective support inside and outside of lessons. They are well briefed about their role and ensure that all pupils are clear about what they are doing. Through pertinent questions they help pupils make good progress.
- Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. They use questioning effectively to make pupils think hard about what they are learning. Pupils respond well to the challenging questions they are

asked. They get involved in discussions to extend their ideas with partners or in small groups. Pupils are encouraged to answer in complete sentences.

- Reading and writing are taught very effectively. Phonics (the sound that letters make) is introduced from the Nursery and children make great strides as they move into Years 1 and 2 because of the very skilful teaching. Even the weakest readers persevere when trying to sound out unfamiliar words using their phonics knowledge. Pupils enjoy reading and talking about books.
- From the early years, children are encouraged to write. They are given many opportunities to write at length and in a variety of styles; this is having a positive impact on their progress in writing. Teachers have recently introduced 'cold' and 'hot' tasks, where pupils write first without much teacher-input and then afterwards to see the progress. Teachers say that it is having a good impact on pupils' writing.
- Teachers encourage good use of literacy in all subjects. They emphasise and explore new words and ask pupils what they mean. Year 6 pupils were asked to write about the relationship between fractions and decimals in their mathematics books, for example. Pupils make good use of dictionaries and thesauri to look up the meanings of words and to find synonyms.
- The most able pupils are often set more demanding work than other pupils and they relish the challenge. It is clear from work in pupils' books that pupils are given different work or help, according to their needs, particularly in English and mathematics. The most able pupils are also offered additional opportunities, such as 'master classes', to help them reach the well-above-expected Level 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The quality of marking by teachers in pupils' books is of a consistently high standard. Teachers check pupils' written work regularly in all subjects and provide feedback in the form of encouraging comments and areas for improvement. Pupils are given time to read and respond to the comments by making corrections, trying additional challenges or rewriting pieces of work.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children start in the Nursery and Reception classes with skills that are often below what is typical for their age, particularly in language and communication and personal development. They make rapid and sustained progress throughout all years groups. Progress often accelerates towards the end of Key Stage 2 for pupils who started at an early stage of learning English.
- Attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check increased since the check was introduced and has been just above average, which represents excellent progress for most pupils. By the end of Year 2, standards are close to the average in reading and mathematics. Writing improved considerably in 2014 and was above the national average. One third of pupils attained Level 3, which is above the expected level for their age, in reading last year. Around one quarter attained this level in writing and mathematics, which was better than pupils did nationally and an improvement on 2013.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 has typically been close to, or just above, the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. There was a dip across the board in 2013. This can be accounted for the relatively small cohort of 19 pupils that year, of whom six had special educational needs and four had joined the school in Year 6 with very low prior attainment. Results for 2014 were much improved, and above the national averages. Pupils did particularly well in writing and the new spelling, punctuation and grammar test, with results well above average.
- Pupils made significantly better progress than average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014. All pupils made at least expected progress in these subjects, with higher than average proportions exceeding this. This excellent progress can also be seen in the current year groups who are on track to attain well. The school has worked hard to improve pupils' writing, with the introduction of new schemes which are having a clear impact. The introduction of a new calculation policy in mathematics has helped to improve consistency and to raise standards.
- More able pupils make excellent progress and increasing numbers are attaining the highest levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. All those who started Year 3 with a Level 3 attained at least a Level 5 in reading, writing, mathematics and the spelling, punctuation and grammar tests in 2014.
- All groups of pupils are making at least good and often better progress, including White British and all other minority ethnic groups and those learning English as an additional language. Disabled pupils or those with special educational needs often made accelerated progress due to the targeted, effective support they receive.
- Disadvantaged pupils (those eligible for the additional funds) made better progress than non-eligible pupils nationally, both in terms of the proportion making and exceeding expected progress. The

attainment gap between these pupils and non-eligible pupils nationally fell in 2014 to approximately three quarters of a term in mathematics, one third in writing and one and a half terms in reading. In-school gaps were one and a half terms in mathematics, and two and a half in reading and writing. Disadvantaged pupils outperformed other pupils nationally in the spelling, grammar and punctuation tests. The in-school gaps are very cohort dependent, but the school is using its resources strategically to close the gaps; this is having a positive impact on all year groups.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- The early years is extremely well led and managed. The team has introduced a new approach to planning that is proving particularly effective in helping staff meet the needs of growing numbers of children with special educational needs. Teaching is excellent in the early years. Each child has a learning profile that details their progress in all areas of learning and includes input from parents and the after-school play service (where relevant). Parents welcome the introduction of open afternoons where they can spend time in classrooms.
- Children are making excellent progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, often from low starting points, across all areas of learning. Parents comments, such as, 'She has made giant steps in her learning,' and the evidence in learning journals are testament to that. There has been an increase in the proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of Reception. The proportion reaching this level rose from 27% in 2013 to 60% in 2014, which was in line with the national average.
- Children feel safe. They are making great strides in their personal and social development. Their behaviour is outstanding. Children are learning to take turns, to work together with others and to listen quietly on the carpet. They stay focused on activities and persevere.
- Children benefit from having specialist music lessons. They clearly enjoyed playing percussion instruments given to them by one of their peers. They obeyed instructions and took turns in copying a rhythm introduced by a child. Outside, their physical development is encouraged through the climbing wall and adventure area, and wide array of resources such as hoops and balls.
- The learning environments inside and outside are well organised, vibrant and include excellent resources that enable children to develop a wide range of skills and confidence. Children experience a good combination of 'free choice' activities and teacher-led sessions, all of which have been well planned often around a topical theme such as fireworks. Adults model for children effectively and encourage them to access the activities. They use questions well to encourage children to talk and to explore their environment.
- Phonics sessions are taught in ability groups across the Nursery and Reception, so that the more able children can be challenged and others given the time they need. Teachers of early years and Year 1 work closely together to ensure that there is a good transition for children once they leave Reception.
- Early years provision at St Clement Danes is recognised by the diocese and local authority as being outstanding. Other schools have been encouraged to visit.

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	101127
Local authority	Westminster
Inspection number	444189

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Katharine Batchelor
Headteacher	Mrs Angela Abrahams
Date of previous school inspection	22 March 2011
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