

St Gabriel's Church of England Primary School

Churchill Gardens Road, London, SW1V 3AG

Inspection dates

11–12 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, fully supported by other leaders and governors, has extremely high expectations of staff and pupils; this has led to strong improvement in all areas, including teaching and achievement.
- Standards have risen rapidly, particularly at Key Stage 2, so that by the time they leave Year 6, pupils' attainment in both English and mathematics is above the national average, and improving. Attainment in mathematics is well above that seen nationally.
- The school is welcoming, caring and supportive of pupils from all backgrounds; this has helped to create a cohesive school community.
- Support staff, who work with pupils in need of extra help, make an exceptional contribution to pupils' successful learning.
- Many children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieve a good level of development by the time they leave Reception as a result of improving provision and regular and thorough assessment of their skills.
- Systems to manage staff performance are rigorous and all staff benefit from high-quality training. Newly qualified teachers and support staff are very well supported in their roles. This process has improved the quality of teaching which is now good, and sometimes outstanding.
- Strong personal, spiritual, moral and cultural development is at the heart of the school's success and underpins pupils' good behaviour. Pupils feel safe at school.
- The governing body robustly holds the school to account for its performance, the management of its finances and safeguarding.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of the quality and quantity of written work pupils should produce to ensure that they build on newly acquired skills.
- Teachers do not always make sure that the most able pupils' reading comprehension skills are sufficiently extended, particularly at Key Stage 1.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, two of which were jointly observed with the headteacher. Inspectors undertook a series of short visits to other lessons across the school and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, as well as representatives from the local authority and the London Diocesan Board for Schools.
- Inspectors took account of the 14 responses to the online Parent View survey and a recent school questionnaire, as well as the views of the parents they met. Inspectors also considered the 24 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including national test results and the school's own information about pupils' achievement, the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, safeguarding policies, and records and documents relating to staff performance.

Inspection team

Lesley Leak, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school which has one form of entry.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families, is much higher than the national average.
- A very high proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic heritages.
- The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is well above the national average. About a quarter of these pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The highest proportion of children with little or no English is currently in the Reception class and Key Stage 1.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so pupils reach higher standards in reading and writing, by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of the quality and quantity of written work pupils produce in lessons
 - extending pupils' reading comprehension skills, especially for the most able, at Key Stage 1.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children enter Reception with skills and knowledge at significantly lower levels than are typically expected for their age. On leaving Reception, in 2013, many children had reached a good level of development. This marks a significant rise in pupils' achievement compared with previous years.
- Over the course of Years 1 and 2, most pupils continue to make good progress in mathematics and writing, securing attainment which is in line with that seen nationally. This is as a result of carefully targeted support, especially for pupils who are at risk of not fulfilling their potential.
- The results of phonics checks (linking letters and sounds) for six-year-olds in 2012 and 2013 were below average; this has had a negative impact on pupils' reading at Key Stage 1. Evidence from this inspection shows that pupils' attainment in reading is starting to rise. This is as a result of improvements to the way phonics is taught, and because pupils are expected to read every day in school and at home.
- Pupils in the upper part of the school started Key Stage 2 with attainment which was below that expected for their age. When they leave Year 6 most pupils reach standards in mathematics and writing which are higher than those seen nationally. Pupils' attainment in reading is broadly in line with national levels. Given pupils' lower starting points, this is a remarkable achievement. Evidence from this inspection shows that pupils' attainment in mathematics, reading and writing is rising in most classes, in the upper school. This is as a result of strengthened teaching and well-targeted support for pupils who are at risk of falling behind.
- The proportion of the most able pupils achieving at the highest levels, in both English and mathematics, is broadly in line with that seen nationally. However, until recently, not enough of the most able pupils in Years 2 and 6 were achieving the highest levels in reading. The school recognises there has been insufficient attention paid to teaching reading comprehension skills at an early enough age.
- The school actively promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination by ensuring pupils who are not making sufficient progress are given extra help to achieve well. Regular checks on pupils' progress mean that anyone who needs extra help is quickly identified and provided with specific support. Consequently, most disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress.
- There is currently no gap in attainment between pupils supported by the pupil premium funding and other pupils in English and mathematics. Eligible pupils are making more progress in English and mathematics than similar pupils nationally. This is because the funding has been effectively spent on meeting the needs of identified pupils through additional support and other small-group activities to accelerate progress in English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Pupils learn in a purposeful and welcoming environment which promotes good relationships and high expectations for behaviour and achievement. Teachers have good subject knowledge and know their classes well.
- Consistently good teaching has accelerated pupils' achievement in mathematics over the past two years, especially at Key Stage 2. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils were given more demanding work as soon as they were ready. Once one group of pupils showed they were able to plot coordinates on a map to find imaginary treasure, they were challenged to find the missing coordinates on a variety of mathematical shapes. Learning was pitched at the right level for the full range of pupils, enabling them all to make rapid gains.
- The planning of learning supports pupils' progress extremely well. For example, in a highly successful Year 4 English lesson, pupils were engaged in writing about whether children aged between seven and 11 should be allowed to go up in space, and learnt to use a sophisticated

range of connectives such as 'nevertheless' and 'although'. Pupils were able to develop their own opinions and strengthen their reasoning skills and were able to produce high-quality writing as a result.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are provided with a caring and stimulating learning environment and are well supported to make good progress with the basic skills of reading, counting and writing. The 'learning journals', which provide evidence of children's learning, are shared with parents and are of an exceptionally high quality.
- A good range of strategies is in place to support those pupils in need of extra help, enabling them to learn and achieve well. Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are making good progress because they benefit from extra support from additional staff who are well trained and highly effective in their role.
- The marking and assessment of pupils' work are thorough and regular, and frequently provide useful guidance about how pupils can improve their work. However, expectations for the quantity and quality of written work are not always high enough, so some written pieces in pupils' books do not fully reflect the skills they have acquired.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Inspectors agree with the views of parents, staff and pupils that behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and courteous to one another and there is a strong community feeling to the school. Friendly and welcoming to visitors, pupils are good ambassadors for the school. They say it is a good school and would recommend it to their friends.
- Pupils value the many opportunities to take on important roles and responsibilities, such as being on the school council, helping in the library or supporting younger pupils.
- Good behaviour routines are well established and any 'off-task' behaviour is managed effectively by the teachers and support staff. As a result, attitudes to learning are good. For example, pupils respond quickly to staff instructions, settle down to work in lessons right from the start and work well together in groups.
- Pupils are happy at school and, consequently, their attendance is broadly average.
- The school site is attractively presented and pupils appreciate the exciting array of equipment provided on each playground. Playtimes and lunchtimes are well supervised and pupils manage their own safety with the equipment well.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to stay safe. Their understanding of the different types of bullying is secure. They say that bullying rarely happens, but when it does the school deals with it swiftly. Pupils are fully aware of internet safety and have been taught about road safety. Staff undertake regular risk assessments of the site to check that pupils are kept safe. Pupils who spoke with inspectors confirmed that they feel safe and very well cared for.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is an inspirational leader who has developed strong teams of staff at all levels who strive to secure the best possible outcomes for all pupils. She knows the local community and its families well, which helps to create a caring and secure environment where pupils can thrive and do their best.
- Underpinning the school's positive picture of rising pupil achievement is the strength of its systems for monitoring pupils' progress that are robustly aligned to the management of staff performance. The considerable investment in high-quality training for staff, many of whom are new to teaching, is having a notable impact on their classroom performance.
- Working together in a core team, middle leaders, many of whom are new to their roles, have provided valuable guidance to teachers about effective ways for pupils to learn in different

subjects. This has led to better activities at the right level across the ability range.

- The curriculum is well planned, is based on topics and related to the interests and needs of pupils, with rich opportunities for additional learning through specialist sports, art, music and work in Spanish. Pupils benefit from a wide variety of enrichment activities and clubs, including residential trips and visits such as the recent ballet school workshop. Since the previous inspection, the school has successfully identified where further development was needed, such as in mathematics and writing, and is currently evaluating its approaches to developing pupils' reading.
- Many opportunities for spiritual, moral and social development are provided, especially through assemblies. Time is made for spiritual reflection and prayer and Christian values are at the heart of the life of the school. The school arranges visits to a range of places of worship and ensures that pupils understand and respect faiths which are different from their own.
- Many parents from a wide range of cultural backgrounds take advantage of the curriculum workshops provided, so they can better help their children at home, especially with reading. As a result, parents often listen to their children read daily and this is helping to raise achievement in reading.
- The school makes good use of the additional funding it receives for sport by employing two part-time sports coaches who have broadened the range of sports available and are training staff to ensure this provision can continue. As a result, many more pupils, including those eligible for pupil premium funding, take part in the increased range of after-school sports clubs that are available.
- The school has enjoyed a strong partnership with the local authority and the London Diocesan Board and welcomes the challenge and support they jointly provide.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have undertaken a review of their performance since the last inspection and a new Chair of the Governing Body has been in post since last September. Governors have benefited from relevant training about ways to keep the school under review and how to follow up rigorously on areas where the school could be doing better. They know how well the school performs against national standards and pay close attention to the school's pupil performance information. They monitor how the pupil premium funding is allocated and are pleased that gaps in attainment have narrowed as a result.
 - The governors hold the headteacher to account for the school's performance and the management of its finances which are sound and linked to the school's educational priorities. Governors make sure that the system for managing the performance of staff is robust and linked closely to pay for teachers and senior leaders. They have developed a good system for checking the quality of teaching for themselves. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and seeks out parents' views of important issues.

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	101129
Local authority	Westminster
Inspection number	430846

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Beckett
Headteacher	Sue McMahon
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 May 2012
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