

St Aidan's Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Albany Road, Stroud Green, London, N4 4RR

Inspection dates 18–19 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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.

- The strong leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher gives the school a clear sense of direction and is supporting well those new to middle leader responsibilities.
- Leaders are ensuring that the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement continues to improve.
- Pupils make excellent progress in all classes. By the end of Year 6, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well above national averages and has been for several years.
- Teaching is consistently at least good. Teachers and learning support assistants work effectively together to ensure the needs of the pupils are met. Teachers have high expectations and set work which is often inspiring.
- The teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds) is outstanding.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same progress as their peers because they are very well supported.
- Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and social areas is outstanding. Pupils respect each other, and staff, and this helps to create a positive ethos.
- Pastoral care is a key strength and the school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. All pupils feel safe and know whom to talk to should they have concerns.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and ensures that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils enjoy school visits, such as those to local museums, and said that visits help their understanding of different topics.
- Children have an excellent start to their education in the early years. They quickly settle into the routines of the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and believe that their children are happy. Parents said that their children are well looked after and that they feel well informed about their progress.
- The governing body is exceptionally effective. Governors know the school well and they robustly hold leaders to account for the performance of pupils as well as for the quality of teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They visited 20 part lessons, many together with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors observed small groups of pupils taught by learning support assistants.
- Inspectors heard pupils from Years 2 and 6 read, and they also held meetings with groups of pupils, including members of the school council.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff and five governors including the Chair of the Governing Body. The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority and the London Diocesan Board for Schools.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's data on pupils' current progress, and planning and monitoring documents. They also considered records relating to behaviour, attendance and the safeguarding of children. Inspectors scrutinised the school's arrangements for spending, including the additional funding for sport and the pupil premium.
- The inspectors did not observe Year 5 on the second day of the inspection as these pupils were involved in activities off the school site.
- Inspectors took account of the communications they had with parents and the 88 responses to the online, Parent View, questionnaire. The inspectors also had informal discussions with parents at the start and end of the school day.
- Questionnaires completed by 21 members of staff were analysed.

Inspection team

Sarah Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Christalla Jamil

Additional Inspector

Helen Baxter

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Aidan's Voluntary Controlled Primary School is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportions of pupils from ethnic backgrounds other than White British, and who speak English as an additional language, are larger than average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is just below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding which, in this school, supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is below the national average. There were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2014 to make any comparisons between their achievement and that of other pupils without the risk of identifying individuals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- Early years provision consists of Nursery for three-year-olds, including ten full-time places and one full-time Reception class.
- The school is part of a local Network Learning Community, a group of 11 primary schools and three secondary schools which work together to help raise standards and improve experiences for pupils.
- The headteacher took up her post in February 2014.
- The school has a breakfast club that is managed by the governing body. The school also provides a number of after-school clubs and a range of sporting activities.
- The school holds the Haringey in Bloom and the Green School Grounds awards and has Fairtrade School status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, and raise pupils' attainment further, by ensuring that teachers:
 - use assessment data more effectively to plan lessons and challenge all pupils
 - make time in lessons for pupils to reflect on what they have learnt and what they need to do to improve.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The strong leadership of the headteacher, supported by her deputy, provides clear direction to a dedicated staff. The quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement continues to improve. There is a strong culture for learning, with all pupils wanting to be successful and staff committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for each pupil.
- Subject leaders are exceptionally well trained. They are well aware of the school's priorities and help staff meet their targets by regularly monitoring pupils' progress in lessons and scrutinising the work in their books.
- The school has rigorous systems in place to monitor pupils' progress and to ensure that high standards are maintained. Any underperformance by pupils, or slowing of their progress, is identified and extra support provided. A high proportion of staff are allocated to the support of pupils with particular needs and this is having a positive impact on standards, as well as improving the confidence of some pupils.
- To support national changes in the curriculum and the new approach to assessing pupils' work, senior and middle leaders are working with others in the Network Learning Community to consider alternative ways to assess pupils' progress.
- The range of subjects pupils study is well matched to their needs and interests. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the opportunities they have to work with pupils in other classes when studying topics in geography and they value the chance to go on school visits to local galleries and museums.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They have a wide range of opportunities to prepare for life in modern Britain through topics such as Black History Month and links with the local church, which include supporting a shelter for homeless people. Pupils have a good understanding of faiths other than Christianity; for example, they spoke with interest about a display on the Five Pillars of Islam.
- All pupils have equal access to the opportunities on offer at the school and this can be seen in lessons as well as in their engagement with activities before and after school. Many pupils take advantage of the after-school clubs that are available, for example drumming and girls' football. The school tackles any discrimination well.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils by providing additional staffing to support their academic achievement and their personal development.
- The school uses the sport and physical education premium effectively. Funds have been used to raise the profile of physical education within the school and provide more opportunities for pupils to become involved in physical activity. The funding is also providing training for staff, by allowing them to work alongside specialist coaches, and there are more opportunities for pupils to participate in competitive sports such as football, athletics and cross country running. Links with the local secondary school and Finsbury Park running track have provided pupils with additional opportunities.
- To promote pupils' literacy, the school has made several interesting links within the local community. For example, pupils work with Greig City Academy as part of a project on poetry in performance. Pupils are also enjoying the link with Arsenal Football Club which is supporting a link between sport and literacy.
- The school has excellent relations with parents who feel that they are very well informed about the progress their children are making.
- The school's systems for monitoring the quality of teaching are highly effective. There are challenging targets, all linked to pupils' achievement and progress, and these are taken into account when making recommendations about teachers' pay.
- The local authority and the diocese both provide effective support and have made a significant contribution to improvements.
- Safeguarding and child protection procedures are rigorous and meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body meets its responsibilities exceptionally well, with governors making a most effective contribution to the quality of the education the school provides. Governors know how to analyse data on the performance of pupils and they use this knowledge to challenge and support school leaders. They bring a range of expertise to the school and have a good understanding of the school's priorities. Governors robustly hold school leaders to account. For example, they ensure that the school is using the pupil premium and additional sport funding to improve pupils' overall achievement. Statutory requirements, such as safeguarding, are fully in place and effective. Governors know how well teachers are performing and are confident about using the national Teachers' Standards when tackling any underperformance. Governors regularly attend training to improve their own skills and to keep

themselves updated.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils respect each other and school staff which helps to create a positive ethos in the school.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and social areas. They thoroughly enjoy their learning and engage in it with enthusiasm. They have pride in their school and their achievements.
- There are well established routines to support all pupils; for example, older pupils act as playground buddies to the younger pupils. The members of the school council take their roles seriously and spoke with confidence about their responsibilities and contribution to the school.
- A very small minority of pupils have challenging behaviour. Any incidents involving these pupils are managed well by adults to ensure that their behaviour does not interfere with others, and the positive ethos is retained.
- Parents and staff are very happy with the behaviour of pupils and their attitudes to learning and are confident that any incidents of poor behaviour are swiftly and appropriately dealt with.
- The attendance of pupils continues to be in line with national averages, reflecting their pride in the school and their love of learning.
- There have been no permanent exclusions in the last three years.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. This judgement is supported overwhelmingly by parents. The school's pastoral care is a significant strength.
- The school's breakfast club provides a safe way to start the school day.
- Pupils' knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet, is excellent. Pupils fully understand the impact of cyber-bullying and know what to do if they have any concerns.
- Pupils have a very clear understanding of the different types of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying. They are confident that bullying rarely occurs, and when it does that it is dealt with quickly by staff.
- The child protection systems are robust and ensure that all children are safe, particularly those who are at risk of falling behind in their learning and development.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teachers and learning support assistants work together effectively. High quality teaching ensures pupils make rapid progress and reach high standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching inspires pupils to want to learn. Teachers are good at capturing pupils' interest so that pupils enjoy their lessons. For example, Year 6 pupils spoke with enthusiasm about creating 'freeze scenes' from *The Highwayman* by Alfred Noyes, with a focus on the characteristics of the different people in the poem.
- Teachers and learning support assistants know their subjects and they use this knowledge effectively to probe pupils' understanding. This was very evident in a French lesson when the teacher questioned pupils about a previous lesson on cheese tasting, gaining the confidence of the pupils and encouraging a successful and enthusiastic response in French. Teachers do not always use assessment data as well as they might to plan lessons that challenge all pupils.
- The inspirational teaching offers opportunities for pupils to reflect on topics more deeply. This was evident in a philosophy for children lesson in Year 2 on decision making. Pupils were able to discuss dilemmas in detail, with teachers using probing questions to encourage pupils to think in greater depth.
- The teaching of phonics is outstanding. Pupils can continue to develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills in other subjects, such as history and science. Year 4 pupils successfully used electronic tablets to research and create presentations as part of a topic on water.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported in lessons. There is a high ratio of adults to pupils in each class to support the wide range of needs and to ensure all pupils understand the tasks they are set and are able to complete them.
- The needs of the most-able pupils are catered for well. These pupils spoke with confidence about the

activities they enjoy in mathematics and English. They particularly like the mathematics challenge lessons after school.

- Staff mark pupils' work regularly. They use praise effectively to motivate pupils and give guidance to pupils on how they might improve their work. Older pupils are aware of their targets and can discuss, with confidence, what they need to do next. Teachers do not always give pupils enough time in lessons to reflect on what they have learnt and what they need to do to improve.
- Senior leaders regularly monitor pupils' progress when they visit lessons, and regular pupil progress meetings between class teachers ensure that those requiring additional support or further challenges have their needs met.
- The large majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire agree that their children are taught well and make good progress.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children start in Reception with a wide range of skills; some are at the early stages of learning English. However, all children quickly settle into the routines and make excellent progress.
- In the 2014 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils attained standards in reading, writing and mathematics which were well above national averages, and this has been the case for several years. Evidence gathered during the inspection suggests that these high standards are being maintained.
- After the proportion of pupils reaching the national average in the Year 1 phonic screening check dipped very slightly in 2014, the school put in extra phonics support in Year 2; these pupils have since made rapid progress. Pupils who read to inspectors impressively demonstrated their use of phonics knowledge to sound out tricky words and used their understanding of punctuation to read quite complex texts fluently and with accuracy.
- The most-able pupils are suitably challenged and achieve well. In Key Stage 2, in 2014, a number of the most-able pupils achieved levels above those of the most-able pupils nationally, notably in mathematics.
- Because disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported, both in classes and in smaller groups, they make progress similar to their peers.
- The school's monitoring information and the work in pupils' books suggest that disadvantaged pupils make the same good or better progress from their starting points as their peers, and that any gaps are narrowing, but low numbers prevent statistical comparisons.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children make excellent progress in the early years as a result of outstanding leadership and management, strong teaching and a warm and caring environment. By the end of Reception, the large majority of children have reached a good level of development and are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about their children's experience. One parent commented, 'My children are always happy to come to school.' Parents appreciate the opportunity to talk to staff and see children's 'special books' which provide a wide range of evidence on their children's progress. Many parents attended a session put on by the school on phonics and were informed how they can support learning at home.
- The early years area has recently been improved, providing more space for the children to learn outside. They are now benefiting from improved indoor and outdoor spaces that they use well. Children's behaviour is excellent. Children work happily together and participate in all the learning activities available to them.
- Staff use questioning skilfully to encourage children to talk about their learning. Staff record and assess children's progress regularly and accurately. They plan an exciting range of activities, as well as providing times for children to initiate activities themselves.
- Children are highly motivated and enjoy talking about their work. This was apparent when they talked to an inspector about their work on the lifecycle of a butterfly.
- There are very close links between Reception and Nursery, and these support children's transition. Parents appreciate the buddying system of older siblings supporting younger children when they first start in the Nursery.

- Proper safeguarding procedures are securely in place and the risk assessment of activities is successfully completed in order that children are kept safe and secure.

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	102132
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	453287

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jetta Norton
Headteacher	Anne Etchells
Date of previous school inspection	19 June 2007
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