

St Catherine Catholic Primary School and Nursery

Money Lane, West Drayton, Middlesex, UB7 7NX

Inspection dates

23–24 October 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- St Catherine Primary School is well managed, with a caring and friendly atmosphere.
- The school offers a good range of subjects and activities that support pupils' progress well.
- Pupils have opportunities to take on extra responsibilities and this promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The headteacher and other leaders have worked effectively to make sure that the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements continue to improve.
- Governors support the school well and ensure that school leaders are held accountable. The vast majority of parents are pleased with the care and safe environment provided by the school and the progress their children make.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They do particularly well in mathematics, where they reach higher standards than the national average.
- Pupils like coming to school and have good attitudes to learning. They feel safe, valued and well cared for. Pupils get along with each other well in lessons and at playtime.
- Teachers expect pupils to work hard and behave well. They plan lessons that pupils enjoy. Teaching assistants are skilled and support pupils effectively.
- Early years provision is good. The Nursery and Reception classes are well organised and managed. Children thrive in the caring atmosphere, happily learning and exploring in a richly resourced and stimulating environment. They make good progress in all areas of learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- When marking written work, teachers do not consistently provide pupils with clear advice on how to improve.
- Boys' attainment in writing is not as good as that of the girls.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors, together with other senior leaders, observed pupils of all ages engaged in a range of activities in different subjects. They also looked at pupils' written work, and at work and observations (known as learning journals) of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor, the headteacher and other school leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to two groups of pupils and also spoke informally with other pupils in lessons and around the school. They listened to pupils reading and talked to them about their reading habits.
- Inspectors examined several of the school's documents. These included: the school's own evaluation of its performance; 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; and records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- The inspector took account of 87 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), one letter from a parent and the views expressed by parents as they arrived at school. Staff returned 32 questionnaires which were analysed.

Inspection team

Jim McVeigh, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Lea Hannam

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Catherine is an average-sized primary school with one class in each year group from Reception to Year 6 and two Nursery groups. All children attend full time in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Almost 40% of pupils come from a White British background and the remainder come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. There are more pupils than average, around a quarter, who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or for children who are looked after) is around 27%, which is similar to the national average.
- At around 5%, the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. Around 10% are supported through school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs; this proportion is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- A new headteacher took up post in September 2014.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the overall quality of teaching to outstanding by ensuring teachers consistently provide pupils with guidance, through marking, on how to improve their work.
- Accelerate boys' progress in writing by providing them with more activities that encourage them to write.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the governing body have a clear vision for the future of the school. They have successfully tackled areas for improvement since the previous inspection, raising the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment and improving the way children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is recorded and checked.
- The new headteacher has formed a strong and ambitious leadership team. There are effective systems in place to manage teachers' performance through regular lesson observations and checks on teachers' planning and pupils' work. Suitably challenging targets are set for teachers and teaching assistants to achieve, always including those related to pupils' progress. Staff training is directly linked to priorities in the school's improvement plan and to raising the quality of teaching.
- The school is accurately judging its own effectiveness and has the right plans in place for improvement. Governors and school leaders make regular checks to ensure that planned actions are effective.
- Additional help is provided for all pupils who show signs of falling behind their classmates. Disadvantaged pupils are enabled to benefit from all opportunities at school, such as trips and clubs. The school takes strong steps to ensure equal opportunities for all and to discourage all forms of discrimination.
- Subject leaders are determined that their areas of responsibility are well managed and that standards continue to rise. Senior leaders provide them with guidance and opportunities to further develop their own leadership skills, for example, in checking the quality of teachers' planning and pupils' work.
- Pupils enjoy a broad and balanced range of subjects which has been well adapted to incorporate the new National Curriculum. For example, stimulating topics are planned around history or geography issues. Each topic incorporates elements of the creative subjects and usually involves a trip, such as to Windsor or Hampton Court, or a visiting drama group to provide memorable moments and bring the topic to life. Parents are given valuable advice about how they can help their children at home.
- The primary school sports funding is used well to support a wide range of sports clubs, including hockey, cricket and gym, and inter-school competitions. Teaching staff have improved their own coaching skills and more pupils now participate regularly in physical activity. A good number of other clubs, including for singing, enrich pupils' experiences well.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and they are effectively prepared for life in modern Britain. Through assemblies, lessons, visits and visitors, pupils learn respect for and acceptance of people with different backgrounds. For example, philosophy lessons, where pupils sit in a circle and discuss ideas, promote trust, tolerance and fair-mindedness. Recent questions discussed include 'Is chocolate rain a good idea?' in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and 'Is it possible to be good all the time?' in Year 5. The operation of the school council helps pupils develop a good understanding of democracy and voting.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They say that their children make good progress at school and are happy and well cared for. Parents who make use of the breakfast and after-school clubs appreciate the support it gives to organising family life. Pupils get a healthy snack and a safe place to enjoy educational activities, and their punctuality improves.
- The local authority provides light-touch support through training opportunities and checking the accuracy of teachers' assessment of pupils' work.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well aware of the extent of their responsibilities and are committed to making their school outstanding. They have a wide range of relevant skills and undertake regular training to keep up to date. Governors get clear reports from the headteacher and gather information for themselves through focused visits and on 'Governors Day,' when a number of governors visit the school. They know how well the school is doing, including the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements. They set ambitious targets for the headteacher. Records of governors' meetings show they hold school leaders to account for their actions.
 - Governors make sure the school makes prudent use of its finances and that teachers are suitably rewarded for their work. They check that additional funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils and that the sports funding increases pupils' participation in physical activity. They make sure safeguarding arrangements fully meet requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- All staff and almost all parents and pupils say behaviour is good. Behaviour records show infrequent incidents of minor misbehaviour and very few of the more serious incidents in recent years. There have been no exclusions in the last three years.
- Pupils know the school rules. They are keen not to lose 'golden time' and to have their achievements, such as writer of the week or for good attendance, celebrated in assemblies. They know good behaviour will help them to do well at school.
- Pupils know what bullying is and the different forms it can take. They say that bullying is uncommon and that teachers sort any incidents quickly.
- Around the school and in lessons, pupils are polite and courteous. At break times they all have someone to talk to or play with and they know they can use the 'friendship stop' if they are alone. As one pupil said, 'If you are upset everyone tries to make you feel better.'
- Pupils take on a variety of responsibilities seriously and with pride. For example, Young Leaders organise games at playtime, while Junior Librarians open and help run the library, and Science Fellows help younger pupils with their science.
- Attitudes to learning across the school are good. Pupils settle down to activities easily and show pride in their work, finishing exercises and taking care with their presentation.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- The site is secure and visitors are appropriately vetted. Pupils are well supervised and they say they feel safe at school.
- Pupils know they need to eat healthily and what constitutes a balanced diet. They are aware of the need for regular exercise. Pupils spoken to say they take part in other sports activities in addition to the usual physical education and swimming lessons.
- Pupils have learned how to keep themselves safe. For example, they know about how to stay safe when using the internet or crossing the road.
- Attendance is monitored closely and absences are followed up promptly. Attendance is above average and punctuality is good.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have established good relationships with pupils. In all classrooms there is a purposeful atmosphere in which pupils are confident to ask questions and share their ideas. Teachers expect high work productivity and good behaviour from pupils and in turn the pupils respond well.
- Phonics (the sounds letters make) is taught well. Year 1 pupils have performed above the average in the national phonics screening check since it began. Young readers in Year 2 demonstrate a good command of, and familiarity with, phonics strategies to pronounce unfamiliar words.
- Staff often use skilful questioning to stretch pupils' thinking. For example, pupils in a Year 5 mathematics lesson were made to consider carefully their most efficient method for solving division calculations when asked what they would say to younger pupils to help them understand the chosen method.
- Well-trained, skilled teaching assistants effectively support pupils' learning in one-to-one or small-group sessions, for example, helping pupils with weaker reading skills to catch up quickly. A small group of the more able pupils in Year 1 were well supported in successfully solving addition sums by walking on number lines.
- Teachers work with colleagues in their own and other local schools to check the accuracy of their judgements about the quality of pupils' work. Teachers mark pupils' written work frequently, correcting mistakes and praising achievements. However, they do not consistently provide guidance for pupils on how to improve the standard of their work.
- Teachers usually plan lessons carefully so that ideas are developed in a logical way. Activities are included to stretch pupils of different abilities. However, a few activities do not motivate all pupils, particularly writing activities for boys. Consequently, some pupils do not always make as much progress as they could.

The achievement of pupils**is good**

- Children start school with levels of knowledge and skill that are generally below those typical for their age. They make good progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. In every year group, pupils from all ethnic backgrounds make similar progress.
- Attainment in all three subjects is rising. Despite a small dip in pupils' performance in reading and writing in 2013, standards were still broadly average. In 2014, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 improved in all three subjects and was above the national average in mathematics.
- Reading is taught effectively so that pupils become confident and regular readers. Pupils have frequent opportunities to read to an adult and their reading books are carefully chosen to match their ability. Staff make good use of a reading scheme designed to engage pupils quickly, and other events such as World Book Day and reading competitions, to raise the profile of reading and promote a love of reading.
- Pupils have good opportunities to talk about writing and to plan and review pieces of writing. They develop strong vocabularies and good writing skills. They make good progress but, overall, boys do not reach the same high standards as girls. Boys say that some of the planning activities for writing tasks are repetitive and boring.
- Pupils do particularly well in mathematics. They quickly pick up the language of mathematics and basic number facts. They can explain the methods they have chosen for calculations clearly. Pupils feel most proud of their achievements in mathematics.
- The most able pupils make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics and reach similar standards to their peers nationally. Besides having harder work in lessons, pupils have a good range of extra challenge. They work on more difficult projects at a secondary school, take part in competitions, such as for poetry and reading, and have science booster sessions.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress in all subjects to their classmates. Their needs are quickly and accurately identified and effective extra help is planned for them. The impact of extra help is checked closely to ensure that pupils' progress improves.
- Pupils who have English as an additional language are well supported to improve their skills in speaking English. Overall, they make similar progress to their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics and often reach higher standards.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making good progress through well-targeted extra help, such as one-to-one and small-group tuition. In 2013, the gaps in attainment between them and other pupils nationally were two terms in reading and one term in writing respectively. The attainment gap in mathematics had closed. Compared to others in the school, disadvantaged pupils were about two terms behind in reading but the gaps in both writing and mathematics had closed.

The early years provision**is good**

- Children settle into school life and expected routines quickly. Involving parents closely and home visits before they start school both help children to feel safe and secure. Parents appreciate the approachability of staff, the care they take of their children and the good communication between home and school.
- Children behave well and play together harmoniously. They follow instructions promptly and become engrossed in the activities they choose. They are enthusiastic and good at choosing different ways to do things, for example, when sorting out objects that would be needed for a party.
- Children achieve well throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in personal, social, emotional and physical development and in reading. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the end of Reception is similar to or slightly below the national average and so they are well prepared for entry into Year 1. Generally, boys do not do as well as girls in developing their early writing skills.
- Adults frequently converse with children. They model expected responses clearly and often correct and extend children's answers. As a consequence, children develop their vocabularies and speak and listen well. Children who have English as an additional language pick up English quickly.
- Adults organise resources imaginatively to provide well-planned opportunities for learning. For example, children in Reception had several different activities available to investigate the properties of two-dimensional shapes. One group went outside with their teacher to hunt enthusiastically for hidden shapes, while other groups chose to make shapes out of dough or combined shapes to make pictures. Children learned the names of mathematical shapes and how to recognise them well. Activities that boys in

particular enjoy have now been modified to encourage boys to engage more in writing.

- Adults regularly observe children when they are engaged in activities to check on their progress. They record children's achievements accurately and include parents' own observations. Consequently, staff know children's interests and level of understanding well, helping them to plan learning opportunities that will appeal to each child.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Indoor and outdoor provision is well organised to provide an exciting environment to stimulate young minds. Activities are linked to a main theme, making play and exploration more meaningful for children. For example, children in the Nursery worked on several activities for someone's birthday, such as card making and cake decorating.

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	102424
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	444216

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	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Arnell
Headteacher	Elizabeth Doonan
Date of previous school inspection	December 2010
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