

St John the Baptist Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School

Cron dall Street, London N1 6JG

Inspection dates

3–6 October 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- School leaders and governors are highly ambitious for the school. Since the previous inspection, their motivating leadership has driven further improvement in the school.
- Leaders are analytical and reflective. They meticulously monitor all aspects of the school's work and take decisive action to ensure that standards are high. Leaders have created a culture where only the best will do.
- The school benefits from strong leadership at all levels. New and aspiring leaders are nurtured carefully to ensure that they are well equipped to carry out their roles. This sustains outstanding leadership.
- Teachers are highly trained and use their skills to help pupils make outstanding progress in a range of subjects. They plan challenging and engaging activities which meet the needs of all pupils.
- From their different starting points, pupils make outstanding progress across the school. By the end of key stage 2, disadvantaged pupils make strong progress compared with national figures.
- The school's core beliefs are based on Christian and British values and are embedded in every part of school life. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive high-quality support. This has enabled them to make strong progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, both in class and around the school. They are self-disciplined and show very positive attitudes to their learning.
- Children make excellent progress in the early years. The Nursery and Reception classes are safe and stimulating environments. Imaginative activities are planned which inspire and delight children.
- The school's systems for tracking pupils' progress quickly enable staff to identify and address gaps in pupils' learning. This works very successfully in English and mathematics. Leaders are working to ensure that progress is tracked carefully across all subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the systems to track pupils' progress across all subjects so that they are as effective as those in reading, writing and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The substantive headteacher took up her post in September 2014. Under her leadership, the school has gone from strength to strength. She and her leadership team have continued to drive improvement across the school. As a result, pupils receive an outstanding education at this school.
- While the headteacher is currently on a year's sabbatical, the leadership team has not allowed standards to drop. Experienced and skilled leaders from the federation have secured a smooth transition in the changes to leadership this year. They are committed to maintaining excellence and have an in-depth and accurate understanding of the school's key priorities.
- Through the federation, leaders and managers at all levels are well supported. Senior and middle leaders receive high-quality professional development and have regular opportunities to shadow more experienced leaders. This ensures that leaders are well prepared for new responsibility and can carry out their roles to a high standard.
- The school has a 'grow your own' attitude to developing leadership, identifying and nurturing leadership potential in teachers and staff. Excellent training and professional development support staff in the early stages of leadership. For example, subject leaders can learn from others doing similar roles in the federation. As new leaders develop, they share their expertise with colleagues and staff from other schools. This contributes to a continuous cycle of developing leadership capacity within the school.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning rigorously. They provide detailed and helpful support in planning, teaching and assessment. Teachers have regular opportunities to reflect on their practice with senior leaders. They take responsibility for their own professional development and are ambitious to develop their skills further. Consequently, teaching is highly effective across the school. Newly qualified teachers are well supported and benefit from a comprehensive training programme.
- The rich curriculum inspires pupils to learn through a range of subjects across the school. Leaders have carefully considered the links between subjects, ensuring that pupils develop knowledge and skills through an enjoyable and creative curriculum. Well-planned extra-curricular activities and trips provide pupils with memorable experiences, such as attending the world para-athletics championships and trips to London museums.
- Leaders analyse the needs of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium funding, and target spending accordingly. They evaluate sharply the impact of actions and are quick to amend ineffective strategies. Consequently, the pupil premium funding is having a positive impact, and disadvantaged pupils make strong and sustained progress across the school.
- The school's provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is outstanding. Leaders show a detailed understanding of the different and often complex needs of pupils in the school. Funding is analysed carefully and directed appropriately. Leaders identify pupils who have special educational needs and/or

disabilities at an early stage and put in place high-quality support. Class teachers are actively involved in this process and adjust their teaching as necessary to ensure that all pupils can access the learning. As a result, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make substantial progress from their starting points.

- Leaders use the sport premium funding effectively to encourage pupils to have active lifestyles and to improve sports provision. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to attend a range of after-school sports clubs, such as football, multi-sports, dance and athletics. Teachers also receive training to help them deliver effective physical education lessons.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key strength of the school. As a result of the school's work, pupils develop a strong awareness of the world around them and are well prepared for life in modern Britain. The school has close links with a local church, which pupils regularly attend. The school's five core beliefs are underpinned by Christian and British values. These are embedded at the heart of the school and pupils exemplify these beliefs. The 'Rights Respecting' status of the school recognises that pupils understand and respect others from different faiths and backgrounds.
- Leaders have worked tirelessly to engage parents and carers in the work of the school. Parent forums, regular social events and workshops have all contributed to the strong sense of unity within the school. Leaders, staff, parents and pupils all work together to make the school successful. As one parent said: 'We're all one community within the school.'

Governance of the school

- Governors share the high expectations of school leaders and have played an important role in the school's journey to outstanding. Their challenge and support to school leaders have ensured that the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been addressed. They have a range of expertise and skills which enable them to support the school effectively and hold school leaders to account. Their clearly defined roles ensure that governors are knowledgeable about all aspects of the school's performance.
- The governing body has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development through regular learning walks in school and meetings with school leaders. Their priorities for further improving the school match those of the school leaders. Governors undertake training to hone their skills and meet their statutory duties with regard to safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have clear processes in place for dealing with concerns, which all staff understand and follow. Safeguarding is discussed at all staff meetings to ensure that staff are kept up to date with statutory safeguarding training and information. Leaders make referrals to external agencies in a timely manner, and follow up concerns until

they are satisfied that pupils have received the necessary support. Pre-recruitment checks for staff are carried out meticulously.

- The school's pastoral team knows the pupils and their families well. It has an extensive programme of support to ensure that all pupils are well cared for, which includes looking after pupils' social, emotional and mental health. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe both inside and outside the school. Parents feel confident that their children are safe and happy at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching and learning are consistently strong across the school. The teachers and support assistants are skilled practitioners who engage and inspire their pupils. As a result, pupils love learning and are motivated to do their best.
- Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge. They use every opportunity to embed and extend learning, encouraging pupils to use subject-specific vocabulary. Consequently, pupils are making extensive progress across a range of subjects.
- Teachers use highly effective questioning to probe pupils' thinking and check their understanding. This helps them to reinforce key concepts and address misconceptions quickly.
- Lessons are planned carefully and are well structured. Pupils can apply and build on their prior learning, which gives them the confidence to attempt more difficult tasks. Teachers ensure that all pupils are challenged in lessons and that work is suited to individual needs.
- Pupils are highly engaged in their learning and respond well to teachers' high expectations. They ask questions spontaneously, showing a curiosity and interest in their subjects. Teachers have established routines which pupils find easy to follow. Consequently, no time is wasted in lessons.
- Support staff are trained to a high standard and support pupils' learning very well. They have secure subject knowledge and break tasks down into manageable steps. This means that pupils can work out challenging concepts for themselves.
- The school has focused successfully on improving progress and achievement in reading. The school's reading programme is delivered consistently well across year groups. Activities are purposeful, and teachers ensure that pupils develop independent reading skills. Pupils read a wide variety of well-chosen texts which interest and challenge them. They also have the opportunity to get their own stories published through an extra-curricular club.
- Leaders and staff assess and check pupils' progress and attainment rigorously, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' progress in these subjects is analysed at regular intervals. Staff use this analysis to identify the different needs of pupils, such as additional support or extra challenge, and plan accordingly. Leaders acknowledge that assessing progress in the wider curriculum needs refining so that they can track progress carefully.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils feel safe at school. They trust staff to look after them and have forged strong relationships with adults at the school.
- Incidents of bullying are very rare. Pupils look after each other and insist that they simply do not tolerate bullying. At playtimes, older pupils help to sort out any unkindness. Pupils have a clear understanding of bullying in all its forms. For example, they learn about racist bullying during 'Black History Week'. Pupils understand how teachers help them to make progress in their learning.
- The school's strong Christian ethos promotes British values well. The core beliefs of cooperation, celebration, determination, respect and honesty are embedded in the school. Pupils demonstrate these beliefs through their exemplary attitudes and behaviour.
- Pupils are proud of their school and feel valued. They understand the importance of education and want to do well. Pupils are aspirational for the future and can talk knowledgeably about different careers they have learned about during 'Work Week'.
- Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility in the school, for example as prefects, school council members, digital leaders and disciples in religious education. They take their roles very seriously. Older pupils know that they have to set an example for younger pupils, and willingly do so. Year 6 pupils wear their blazers with pride. As one pupil said: 'It's a big responsibility but helps us get ready for secondary school.'
- School leaders addressed concerns about pupils' healthy eating by making free school meals available for all pupils. Pupils enjoy healthy menus and can explain confidently how to keep themselves fit and healthy.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of e-safety. They know to use the 'frog box' to report any issues and have learned about cyber bullying during 'E-Safety Week'. The school also holds parental workshops to encourage them to monitor their children's safe use of the internet at home.
- Pupils learn about road safety and have taken an active role in a local 'Safer Streets' project. Visits from the fire brigade help pupils understand fire safety, such as how to cook safely.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are respectful to each other and staff. They show exemplary conduct and self-control at all times.
- The 'Going for Gold' behaviour system is used consistently well across all year groups, and pupils are clear about how they are expected to behave. They aspire to be 'gold' at the end of each day and are motivated to be the best they can. Team successes are celebrated along with individual ones. For example, classes compete for the 'Golden

Cup' each week for excellent attitudes and behaviour. One pupil said: 'If someone is letting us down, we try and help them.'

- Attendance has improved in recent years and is now above the national average. The number of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced significantly. The school has a strong inclusion team that has put in place highly successful strategies to promote and maintain good attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- As a result of outstanding teaching and learning, pupils in all year groups and across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics, make substantial and sustained progress over time.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is well above the national average. Disadvantaged pupils' progress in these subjects is better than other pupils, nationally, from similar starting points. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' outcomes in key stage 1 are consistently high, including for disadvantaged pupils. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, achieve outcomes of a high standard. The proportion of pupils reaching high standards in reading and mathematics is well above average at the end of key stages 1 and 2.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is well above the national average.
- Current school performance information shows that pupils are making strong progress across the curriculum. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Evidence of learning in pupils' books supports the school's assessment information and indicates that progress across all year groups is outstanding. A high proportion of pupils are working beyond age-related expectations.
- The quality of writing is consistent across the curriculum, because teachers have the same high expectations of pupils' writing as in English lessons. For example, in science, pupils use strategies learned in English lessons to improve their writing. Work in books is neatly presented and pupils take great pride in their work.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The early years provision is a bright and stimulating environment where children make excellent progress in all areas of learning.
- Teaching is consistently of a very high quality. Adults use every opportunity to model language to children. They provide clear explanations and highly effective support. As a result, children feel comfortable joining in with all activities. They are very keen to share their learning and ask questions, demonstrating curiosity and a desire to learn.

- Children are engaged in their learning because activities are well planned, interesting and based on the developmental needs of children. For example, Reception children created a piece of shared writing inspired by a trip to a fire station, and were able to draw on their experiences. Both the indoors and outdoors areas are organised creatively to meet the different needs of children.
- Relationships between adults and children are strong. Staff listen to children's ideas and praise them regularly. High-quality display work celebrates children's achievements and children are proud of their work.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. They respond quickly to instructions and know the well-established routines. Staff model how to use good manners. Adults organise resources carefully to encourage children's independence. For example, children tidy up resources by matching them to photos on the drawers.
- Leaders have a rigorous assessment system to assess children's knowledge and skills when they join the early years. Children typically enter with below-average starting points. Staff track progress with precision, and plan challenging activities meticulously to address gaps in children's development. As a result, children make strong progress.
- The proportion of children, including disadvantaged children, who achieve a good level of development by the end of Reception is above the national average. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make substantial progress from their starting points. Consequently, children are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Leaders ensure that parents and carers are engaged in their children's learning. Staff conduct home visits and organise welcome meetings prior to children starting in the early years. Parents regularly attend events, such as parents' evenings, and are invited to 'stay and play' to help children settle. The school holds workshops to help parents support their children at home, for example with phonics and early reading. Parents regularly contribute to their children's learning profiles.
- Safeguarding is effective. All statutory policies and procedures are in place and staff have been thoroughly trained.

School details

Unique reference number	100266
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10036330

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	327
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Louis Coiffait
Headteacher	Lucy Blewett, Head of School Fiona Judge, Executive Headteacher Sian Davies, Executive Principal
Telephone number	020 7739 4902
Website	www.st-john.hackney.sch.uk
Email address	office@st-john.hackney.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 April 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is one of eight schools in the Primary Advantage Federation. The head of school and executive headteacher joined the school in September 2017. The substantive headteacher is on sabbatical and joined the school in September 2014.
- The school is larger than an average-sized primary school. The early years provision consists of a Nursery class and two Reception classes.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above average.

- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The school currently meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out over three days. An Ofsted Inspector led the inspection on day one. Her Majesty’s Inspector took over the inspection on day two. The inspection was concluded on day three.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes and in a range of subjects. School leaders joined inspectors for many of these lesson observations.
- The inspection team met with senior leaders, middle leaders, managers, teaching staff and pupils. Discussions were held with two members of the governing body and with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed work in pupils’ books from all year groups and across the curriculum. Historical and current outcomes for pupils were scrutinised.
- Inspectors evaluated documentation provided by the school, including the school’s self-evaluation and development plan, attendance information, behaviour logs, safeguarding records, the single central record, and monitoring records of teaching and learning.
- The inspection team considered the views of six parents who responded to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, and held informal discussions with parents at the beginning and end of the school day. They took into account 24 responses to the staff survey and nine responses to the pupils’ survey.

Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Jo Franklin	Ofsted Inspector
Margaret Warner	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Matthews, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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