

Our Lady of Muswell Catholic Primary School

Pages Lane, Muswell Hill, London N10 1PS

Inspection dates

28–29 November 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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Senior leaders and governors work very well to embed the school's Catholic values. This has ensured an inclusive education where all pupils are treated equally and achieve high standards.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching carefully. They maintain a drive for excellence in teaching while providing effective support where necessary.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and plan interesting lessons that engage and motivate pupils.
- Pupils receive a broad and rich curriculum that encourages a deep understanding of the subjects and the topics they learn.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils value each other's contribution in discussions and learn to ask questions and share their views. Pupils have a good understanding of fundamental British values.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is outstanding. Plans are implemented effectively and additional adults provide strong support and guidance to make sure that these pupils make sustained progress.
- Pupils make outstanding progress and their attainment is high in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders and teachers carefully check pupils' progress. They use information well to ensure that additional support is provided in a timely fashion where pupils need it most.
- A priority for all staff is that of keeping children safe. From supervising pupils at play, through to discussing with pupils how to keep safe when using the internet, teachers have pupils' safety and welfare at the centre of their work.
- Behaviour around the school is outstanding. Pupils are very well prepared for lessons and show highly positive attitudes to learning. Pupils fully understand the expectations set for them and respond extremely well.
- Attendance is in line with the national average and improving. Persistent absence, which is limited to children from a very small number of families, is reducing rapidly.
- Teaching and learning in the early years are good. Children make good progress from their starting points. They have opportunities to explore and become increasingly independent. However, there are times when adults intervene insufficiently to focus children's learning and increase the levels of challenge.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise children's achievement in the early years by increasing the support and guidance children receive when they are working independently.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher and senior leaders provide very effective leadership. Over time, senior leaders have embedded a culture of high expectations and excellence in teaching. This has ensured that the needs of pupils are well known and that they are supported effectively. As a result, pupils do extremely well.
- The headteacher motivates and guides staff and has ensured that the school is a very inclusive place where all pupils are valued and treated equally. She has led staff well in promoting values of respect, tolerance and fairness across the school. The school is not complacent, with leaders and teachers constantly keeping provision under review so that it continues to develop and improve.
- There is a relentless focus on learning and assessment. Leaders regularly review the progress pupils are making, and engage with teachers to help refine plans to make sure that no pupil is left behind. This has been particularly successful for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide support and activities that improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Kept under close review, its use is helping close the achievement gap between these and other pupils, which diminishes rapidly as they go through the school.
- Leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is outstanding. Leaders analyse pupil performance information thoroughly to swiftly identify pupils' needs and to plan additional work to meet them. Adults providing support receive high-quality training and are very knowledgeable about their role and the needs of pupils they work with. They work closely with class teachers to adapt, support and guide pupils, ensuring that they achieve very well while also being included within the class. Additional specialist support is used to advise and plan programmes and resources.
- Leaders use sports premium funding effectively to provide additional specialist sports coaching and to enrich provision for physical education and sport for all pupils.
- The curriculum provides a broad and rich experience that captures pupils' interests and enthusiasm. Subjects are well planned to provide depth and progression in learning, and also reinforce literacy, mathematics and reasoning. Leaders are reviewing curriculum provision to ensure greater depth and focus on achievement and progression across subjects in the wider curriculum. This is already having an impact in some subjects, for example in computing and music. Revision to planning and assessment in science is improving pupil progress in learning and scientific investigation. Leaders know that there is still more to be done but have effective plans in place to continue this review. Home learning is organised well and encourages pupils to follow up interests and learning after the school day.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The school's strong Catholic values are integral to teachers' relationships with pupils. Reflection and sharing thoughts and ideas with each other is a natural part of pupils' experience in lessons. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions and talk about their

views and the meaning of actions they take, valuing each other's contribution. Pupils learn about different cultures and religions. They are taught about key values such as democracy, honesty, and the difference between right and wrong. This actively promotes a secure understanding of fundamental British values and a positive view of diversity.

- Parents appreciate the work of the school. They value the dedication of the headteacher and all staff in providing a community where their children achieve very well and feel safe and happy.

Governance of the school

- Governors are skilled in questioning and challenging the school to ensure that high standards and quality are sustained. They make visits to the school and report back and discuss what they see. They work well with senior leaders, asking relevant questions and thereby developing a good understanding of the school's strengths and priorities. They also work hard to maintain good relationships with staff and parents.
- Governors monitor spending carefully. They have been very active in supporting leaders in managing difficult budget decisions to ensure that these do not have a negative impact on the quality of provision and the high standards achieved. They evaluate the impact of additional funding to make sure that it is spent wisely.
- On the basis of the training they have received, governors have a very good understanding of how the school ensures that pupils are safe. They review the school's safeguarding procedures frequently to make sure that they are working well. They are rigorous in ensuring that all relevant checks are made when recruiting staff. They check the school's recruitment records regularly.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The whole-school culture and values have 'keeping children safe' at their core. Leaders make sure that all staff are appropriately trained and kept up to date on all aspects of safeguarding. The safeguarding policy is implemented effectively and all staff are vigilant to ensure that pupils are safe and protected.
- Leaders know pupils and families well and keep a close check on safeguarding concerns. They maintain very good links with external agencies and are rigorous in following up concerns. Where these arise, leaders engage family support services and maintain communications with all those involved.
- Pupils are very knowledgeable on how to keep safe when using computers and the internet. They have learned this well from teachers who promote online safety effectively. Pupils know how to protect themselves and their passwords as well as identify possible threats and inappropriate emails. They act as buddies in the playground and look out for each other to make sure everyone is included and feels safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching, learning and assessment are strong. High-quality teaching is at the heart of the school's success in ensuring that pupils make outstanding progress and achieve very well.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge that they use to plan well-structured lessons. They are particularly good at engaging pupils in talking together to discuss their ideas, and to rehearse possible solutions to the problems they have been set. Work provided is mostly at the right level for pupils, with tasks carefully tailored to individual needs where required.
- Interesting and stimulating activities make excellent use of key questions and extra prompts on displays around classrooms. These help pupils find the answers and solve problems for themselves.
- Teachers use assessment very well to check on pupils' progress. For example, they ask focused questions of those who are uncertain and need the opportunity to talk through their answers.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are taught very well across the school. Pupils develop quickly in confidence because of the high-quality interactions they have with adults. Pupils make significant progress in overcoming their difficulties while receiving a broad and rich learning experience. Support staff are well trained and use their skills effectively, providing additional help and guidance to ensure that all pupils gain the skills and knowledge they need.
- The teaching of phonics is outstanding. All staff have a clear understanding of the resources and strategies for teaching phonics knowledge. Careful grouping of pupils and excellent teaching from both teachers and support staff ensure that pupils develop great confidence in applying phonics in their reading and writing.
- Consistency in the teaching of reading makes sure that pupils build step-by-step on their prior knowledge and so extend their reading skills. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to discuss the books they read and clarify their understanding. This ensures that they get to the heart of what the books mean.
- Checks on pupils' progress are frequent and part of teachers' daily practice. Detailed feedback encourages pupils to look closely at the work they have done. It gives them a clear view of what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers set high expectations for the quality of presentation in English lessons. However, these expectations are not consistently reinforced in other subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. This is due to the way leaders and teachers work together to create a truly inclusive environment. They ensure that the core values of care, respect and tolerance are central to everything the school does. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and are highly motivated. They listen very well to adults and allow each other to offer

opinions without interruption. This politeness and courtesy is central to the school's values and is seen in the mutual respect shown by teachers and pupils.

- Pupils show a very strong understanding and appreciation of diversity, both within the school and in society. Pupils prepare and lead worship and reflection, including liturgy and the significance of events in the Christian year. They engage in charitable work and discuss and debate current issues facing children in the world. Pupils respond very well to the good links teachers make to democracy, law, and the importance of free speech. As one pupil said: 'It is important to be able to have free speech but also important that people know the responsibilities that come with it.'
- The school is a safe place. Pupils report that they feel safe in school and are confident that they can go to any member of staff if they have concerns. They talk of 'looking after each other' and have confidence that, if they felt unhappy or alone, someone would come along and look after them. Pupils do not consider bullying to be an issue at the school but, if it ever did happen, they say that adults would deal with it immediately. Pupils have huge respect and confidence in the staff. Parents confirm the view that the school is a safe place and that the care of pupils is paramount.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils conduct themselves very well in lessons and around the school. They are courteous and polite on stairwells, walk carefully around the building, respecting the learning environment provided for them. In the playground and at lunchtimes, pupils play together and behave excellently.
- Attendance is in line with the national average and improving. Several pupils travel long distances to attend the school. This sometimes leads to late arrivals in the morning, but the school is working effectively with those families where this is a challenge. Persistent absence on the part of children from a very small number of families is reducing rapidly.
- Pupils are very well prepared for lessons. They listen attentively to their teachers and engage willingly in activities. They organise themselves well when working together. Pupils support and challenge each other to achieve a successful conclusion to the challenges that have been set.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Leaders' sustained commitment has ensured that all pupils achieve well and that standards are high and improving. For some time, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 has been well above the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics is above average; the proportion achieving greater depth across all three subjects is also very high.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was well above the national average.

- Pupils in all year groups make outstanding progress in reading. Effective teaching of phonics and comprehension, and access to an increasingly rich variety of literature, ensures that pupils not only read well, but enthusiastically.
- Pupils make strong and sustained progress in writing. They show a very good knowledge of different purposes of writing and use this well to adapt their style and vocabulary accordingly. Pupils respond well to the feedback provided to them. Although pupils make a good effort with handwriting in English books, the presentation of work across subjects is inconsistent. This is something leaders are aware of and are working to improve.
- Whereas in the past, outcomes in mathematics were not as high as in reading and writing, the significant work done to improve achievement in mathematics is ensuring strong progress and high achievement across the school. Pupils show a good level of challenge and reasoning in applying their mathematical knowledge to solving problems and complex calculations.
- Pupils' outcomes across other subjects are good, with some pupils making exceptionally good progress and achieving well in subjects such as computing. The progress pupils make in science has been variable, but recent assessment shows improved progress; pupils have a good understanding of how to structure scientific investigations. Pupils speak in depth about work they have studied in subjects including history and geography. Strong links across subjects ensure that pupils apply their learning well and make connections between their learning. They also use opportunities to practise and reinforce their skills in reading, writing and mathematics very well.
- The progress made by all groups of pupils is consistently strong. Disadvantaged pupils make sustained and often excellent progress in their learning, significantly closing the attainment gap that exists between themselves and other pupils at the school. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make particularly outstanding progress. Very carefully developed targets and plans, along with effective adult support, ensure that they achieve well and are successfully integrated into classes alongside their peers.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children make good progress through the Nursery. They are joined at the beginning of the Reception year by children from other nurseries. Good progress continues through the Reception year, and the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception is above that seen nationally.
- Children are well prepared for entry into Year 1. They have successfully learned the routines of the school and become increasingly able to work on their own. Stimulating classrooms and the outdoor learning environment provide a range of enriching learning experiences to capture children's interest.
- Children behave very well and respond very positively to the enthusiasm and support provided by adults. They are calm and sensible in the classroom and outdoor play areas. They are kept safe and they feel safe.
- Teaching and learning in the early years are good. Teachers plan a broad range of interesting activities that encourage children to be independent and work with increasing concentration. Some young children who are learning English as an

additional language are successfully encouraged to develop fluency and confidence in both speaking and writing. Teaching assistants work well as part of the early years team, supporting children, and encouraging them to explore their ideas. However, additional adults do not intervene sufficiently when children are working independently, to ask questions to raise the quality of their learning experience.

- The early years provision is well led and managed. The new early years leader is rapidly growing into this role and is well supported. Children's achievement and progress are carefully checked to identify those who need extra help and support. Once identified, children receive short bursts of extra help which are kept under close review. This makes sure that no child is left behind and that those with gaps in knowledge or skills very quickly catch up with other children. A new approach to managing assessment has been recently introduced to give parents greater involvement. This still needs time to embed.

School details

Unique reference number	102142
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	10023614

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	431
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marco Franchi
Headteacher	Angela McNicholas
Telephone number	020 8444 6894
Website	www.ourladymuswell.haringey.sch.uk
Email address	office@ourladymuswell.haringey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 January 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is below average and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average. The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is similar to that of other schools nationally. The school has a strong link with the local Catholic church.
- The school is part of a 'Challenge Partnership' working with other schools across the country to review quality and support professional development.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was in two parts. Following a short inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, a full inspection took place in the same week to undertake a section 5 inspection.
- Inspectors observed learning taking place in all year groups. Observations were undertaken with senior members of the school. Inspectors met with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority
- Meetings were held with pupils to discuss learning and their views of the school.
- Discussions took place with leaders regarding their roles and the impact of their work.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and they spoke with pupils in the playground, in lessons, and as they moved around the school building.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documents, including information on pupils' progress across the school. They looked at improvement plans, curriculum plans and reviews of the quality of teaching. Inspectors also examined school records relating to safety and behaviour.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' books to check their progress across a range of subjects.
- Inspectors took account of the 177 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and informal discussions with parents during the inspection. They also reviewed results of 39 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

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Brenda Watson	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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