

St Robert Southwell RC Primary School

Slough Lane, Kingsbury, London, NW9 8YD

Inspection dates 22–23 January 2013

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.

- Standards have risen steadily in recent years and are now above the national average.
- Pupils make good progress in all year groups, especially in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is good. As a result, pupils make consistently good progress in lessons.
- The school is led strongly by the headteacher and her senior team. They have a clear idea of what they need to do to improve the school. They check carefully to make sure that pupils are making good progress.
- The governing body is very keen for the school to do well, and offers good support to school leaders as well as asking them searching questions.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are proud of their school, work hard and enjoy learning. Their attendance is above average.
- The school is very welcoming and friendly. All groups of pupils feel valued, safe and fully included in the life of the school. Pupils from different backgrounds get on well together.
- The support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is very well managed. This means these pupils make good progress.
- The increasing numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language are taught well. They quickly learn English, and do well.
- School leaders have a good relationship with parents and carers, who strongly support the school and its leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The writing standards of more-able pupils are not as high as standards in other areas of their work.
- Subject leaders check the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in English and mathematics, but leaders of other subjects do not do this so well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 part lessons, six of which were jointly observed with school leaders. Inspectors also made a number of shorter visits to observe other aspects of the work of the school.
- Meetings were held with members of staff including senior leaders, subject leaders and other teachers with positions of responsibility. Inspectors held meetings with three groups of pupils, and spoke informally to a number of pupils at break and lunchtime. The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority and with a group of members of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of the 61 responses to Ofsted’s online Parent View questionnaire, and looked at the results of a larger survey of the views of parents and carers that the school carried out recently. They also spoke to a number of parents and carers in person. Inspectors considered the 41 completed staff questionnaires they received in making their judgements.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ books and at teachers’ planning. They also looked at school documents including information of pupils’ current progress, plans for improving the school, records on pupils’ behaviour and attendance, and at how the school keeps children safe.

Inspection team

Mike Phipps, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Ramesh Kapadia	Additional inspector
Noureddin Khassal	Additional inspector
Patricia Underwood	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Robert Southwell RC Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. It has Early Years Foundation Stage classes for Nursery and Reception-aged children.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is considerably higher than is found nationally. The largest group is pupils of Irish heritage, with smaller numbers from a range of other minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than national figures.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or with a parent in the armed forces, is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is slightly below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school does not make use of any off-site alternative provision for its pupils.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise further the quality of pupils' writing, especially that of more-able pupils, by:
 - providing more chances for pupils to practise their writing in different subjects
 - allowing more time in lessons for pupils to write at length
 - planning demanding work which extends the writing of more-able pupils, and which encourages them to work with less help from the teacher.
- Develop the role of subject leaders, in line with those of literacy and numeracy, so they have a greater impact on the quality of teaching in their area, by:
 - systematically planning how to improve the quality of teaching in their subject
 - checking the quality of planning, teaching and marking in their subject
 - working with other subject leaders to plan work which makes links between different subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those expected for their age, particularly in language. They make good progress, so that by the time they enter Key Stage 1 they have almost caught up, and their skills are broadly average.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2, particularly in English and mathematics. Standards have risen in recent years. By the end of Key Stage 2, they are above average in English and significantly above average in mathematics. However, fewer pupils reach the higher levels in writing than in reading and mathematics. This is because pupils do not always have the chance to write at length in different subjects, or to plan and complete a writing task on their own without adult support.
- Average point scores show that pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals attain more highly than all pupils nationally. This is because the school has spent extra funds well for pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium on one-to-one tuition in mathematics, extra teaching of basic skills and assisted places at the breakfast club.
- Pupils develop their literacy and numeracy skills well, and apply these skills across different subjects. However, pupils do not always write enough at length in different subjects.
- Reading standards are good. Younger pupils have a good understanding of the sounds that letters make, so they are able to work out words they are unsure of. Pupils enjoy doing lots of reading, and most read confidently by Year 2. Older pupils talk with enthusiasm about their favourite books and authors.
- Support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is managed very effectively by the school's Inclusion Manager, who carefully checks the progress of these pupils and organises high quality extra help for them. As a result, these pupils make good progress.
- The increasing numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic groups achieve well. Most pupils who speak English as an additional language quickly learn English, and achieve more highly than similar pupils nationally.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Pupils make good progress in all year groups because teachers aim high, relationships between teachers and pupils are friendly, and pupils are encouraged to do their best.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported. The adults who support them work very effectively with class teachers to make sure that these pupils make good progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well taught and get the extra help they need. The school employs staff who speak Polish, Tamil and other languages who give these pupils valuable support.
- In the many lessons where teaching is good, work is set at the right level for pupils. For example, in a good Year 5 mathematics lesson on division, pupils with different abilities were given tasks at different levels of difficulty, so all pupils made good progress.
- At times, more-able pupils are given writing tasks that are too easy for them. For example, in a Year 4 religious education lesson, all pupils were observed working on the same task, which provided little challenge in writing for the more-able pupils in the group.
- Good questioning makes pupils think hard. In a Year 1 science lesson on different materials, for example, the teacher's effective questions stretched pupils and allowed her to check their understanding, so they made good progress.
- Most teachers mark pupils' work very well, particularly in English and mathematics. Pupils are clear on how to improve their work. Pupils act on this advice, assess their own and classmates' work, and write comments to the teacher. Occasionally, this good practice is not consistent

across all classes and subjects.

- Pupils' progress is carefully checked by school leaders, and extra help is given when needed. Sessions which the school runs before school successfully support the learning of groups of pupils who may not otherwise do so well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are friendly, considerate and confident. They are proud of their school, work hard and enjoy learning.
- The school is a welcoming and friendly place. Pupils told inspectors that children from many different backgrounds all get on well together. School leaders have successfully created an atmosphere in which all groups of pupils are included in the life of the school and feel valued. One parent spoke for many in describing the school as a "family community".
- Pupils are keen to learn and want to do well. They work well in lessons without help from the teacher, and concentrate for long periods of time when they are given the opportunity to do so. Behaviour around school is good, and pupils treat adults and each other with respect.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school. They know how to keep themselves safe, and have a good understanding of e-safety. Parents and carers are confident that their children will be kept safe.
- Pupils know about different types of bullying, like cyber-bullying. They say bullying is rare, but their teachers deal with it quickly and effectively.
- The school's behaviour code is well known by pupils, and is rarely broken. Poor behaviour and racist incidents are very rare. Pupil exclusion from school is almost unknown.
- The school's breakfast club is well run, and provides good care, so pupils enjoy a calm and purposeful start to their school day.
- The school has taken action to improve pupils' attendance, which is rising and is now above average.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils is not outstanding because a small number of pupils sometimes interrupt the learning of others, and some pupils lose concentration in lessons where teaching is not good.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is well led by the headteacher and her senior team. They have a clear idea of how to improve the school. School leaders check to make sure their plans for improvement are working. They enjoy the support of staff, who say the school is improving strongly.
- Senior leaders regularly check the quality of teaching. Targets set for teachers concentrate on raising pupils' achievement, and are well linked to training and to their salary progression.
- The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is regularly checked by the school's literacy and numeracy leaders, who act effectively to raise standards in their areas of responsibility. The role of leaders of other subjects is not so well developed, so they have less impact on raising standards. For example, they have fewer chances to check on the quality of planning, teaching and marking in their subjects or to work with other subject leaders. This means they cannot easily devise improvement plans or directly help teachers to improve teaching in these areas.
- Pupils' learning in their subjects is planned well. Pupils enjoy interesting lessons and experiences in which to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. However, pupils do not write enough in different subjects. Pupils' learning is enhanced by residential visits, sports, artistic opportunities, clubs and activities. Themed weeks develop pupils' basic skills in an enjoyable way.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong, and show concern for others, for example through fundraising. Pupils visit their local Catholic church for Mass, and visit places of worship from other faiths. Inspectors saw a Year 6 pupil leading a class prayer in her home language, Russian, which was

observed respectfully by other pupils.

- The school's arrangements to keep pupils safe fully meet legal requirements.
 - School leaders carefully 'buy in' good-quality support from the local authority and other sources. They use these external reviews to confirm their accurate view of the school's strengths, and the areas to improve.
 - School leaders promote equal opportunities and tackle discrimination well. They check pupils' results to make sure all groups achieve equally well. The school is proud of the range of cultures and backgrounds from which its pupils come, and celebrates the contribution each group makes to the life of the school.
 - The school's plans for improvement concentrate on the right areas. The substantial rise in standards, and improvements since the last inspection, including in the quality of teaching, show that school leaders have the capacity to make further improvements.
 - School leaders have built a strong relationship with parents and carers. A 'Parents' Forum' meets regularly, which helps communications between home and school. As a result, parents and carers are firmly supportive of the school and its leaders.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very ambitious for the school and offers effective support to school leaders as well as holding them to account. Governors take a close interest in the work of the school, and are very well informed about its strengths and weaknesses. They have an accurate idea of the quality of teaching, and understand how the school makes decisions about targets for teachers to improve their performance and about teachers' salary progression. They use pupil information well to identify areas that need improving in the performance of the school, comparing it with pupils and schools nationally. Governors help senior leaders to draw up plans to improve the school, and they check that these plans are working. Governors make sure that the school's finances are used well, and that the school uses funding from the pupil premium to close any gaps in pupils' achievement. Governors carry out their statutory duties well, and make sure they meet all legal requirements about keeping children safe. The governing body makes sure that it accesses training to keep itself up to date and to hone its skills.
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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	101543
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	400488

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	406
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Manning
Headteacher	Honor Beck
Date of previous school inspection	25–26 January 2010
Telephone number	020 8204 6148
Fax number	020 8905 0287
Email address	admin@robsouth.brent.sch.uk

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