

Holy Cross RC Primary School

Basuto Road, London SW6 4BL

Inspection dates

23–24 September 2015

Overall effectiveness

Good

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The well-being of every pupil is central to the ethos of Holy Cross. As such, it is a happy place to learn and pupils are exceptionally well cared for and feel safe.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the last inspection and is now securely good.
- Staff new to the school receive a mentor to ensure that no time is wasted in securing pupil outcomes.
- There is a well-defined culture of nurturing and support within the school that is endorsed by all staff.
- Arrangements for keeping pupils safe are well established and effective.
- Governors undertake their roles with great assurance and are highly effective in holding leaders of the school to account.
- The executive headteacher is an exceptional leader. She is passionate about securing the very best outcomes for all pupils and is relentless in her drive for excellence. She motivates staff to be the very best they can be.
- The same resolve is shared by the associate headteacher who, alongside the executive headteacher, provides focused and determined leadership.
- Senior and subject leaders bring enthusiasm and energy to their role and are committed to the vision of making Holy Cross an outstanding school.
- The bilingual school brings a unique dimension to provision at Holy Cross. The same high expectations and passion for improvement permeate its work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not consistently provide pupils with the opportunities they need to allow them to deepen their knowledge and practise their skills in a range of subjects.
- Not all teaching is securely good.
- In some lessons, activities are not shaped well enough to ensure that all pupils remain focused on their learning. When this happens, pupils become distracted and their progress slows.
- Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor provision does not fully support the physical development needs of all children, particularly those of boys.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school, so that all teachers consistently:
 - use assessment information to ensure all pupils are focused on their next steps in learning so that rates of progress within all lessons will accelerate
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to deepen their knowledge and apply their skills across a range of subjects.

Extend opportunities within early years outdoor play to meet the physical development needs of children, particularly those of boys.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The executive headteacher is an inspirational leader. She motivates staff to want to improve their practice and has created a culture of high expectation. Along with the associate headteacher, she is relentless in the drive to improve outcomes for all children. Through encouragement, support and well-established system leadership, they have managed the considerable turnover of staff experienced at the start of the academic year.
- Leaders at all levels are equally committed to achieving excellence and demonstrate passion and determination in their roles. Collectively, they are key to the rapid improvements made since the school was last inspected.
- Leaders are outward facing and recognise the benefits of working in partnership with other schools. The support received from other settings, particularly those linked to the executive headteacher, provides security in leadership.
- Plans to improve the work of the school are detailed and identify appropriate priorities. They are evaluated regularly and subsequently refined to reflect findings.
- The bilingual school provides a unique and exciting dimension to provision. On admission, parents can opt for a combined English and French class. Leaders across both settings have worked tirelessly to ensure that systems are consistent and provision reflects the high expectations set at Holy Cross. This ensures that pupils receive their full curriculum entitlement and demonstrates the school's commitment to equal opportunities.
- The local authority provides highly effective and comprehensive support to the school. Consultant teachers are commissioned to support and sustain improvement priorities. They meet regularly to review outcomes as part of the school's improvement board.
- Subject leaders have been thoughtful in developing their approaches to curriculum planning. They bring subjects together under a shared theme for learning. Each theme has science, geography or history as its focus, which provides the context within which all learning is planned.
- Enrichment activities supplement the core curriculum offer. Work displayed around the school demonstrates pupils' enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning in this way. For example, a forensics workshop helped pupils uncover hidden clues to solve problems.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is well developed and well supported by the curriculum and religious context of the school. Pupils' personal and social education is given equally high priority.
- Fundamental British values permeate the curriculum, as well as focused events such as the planned 'Democracy Week' and visits to the Houses of Parliament. As such, pupils have a well-developed understanding of living in Britain and their contribution to it.
- A detailed curriculum map informs parents of the areas of learning covered within each theme. Regular meetings keep parents informed as to how they can help at home.
Parents are wholly supportive of the school and recognise the significant improvements since the school's last inspection. One parent said: 'It is a joy to see how well the school staff, management and parents

have worked together to turn around the school.'

- The 'parents' council' is actively involved in supporting the work of the school. A representative from each class meets with other representatives regularly, to offer ideas and share opinions on how to improve provision and increase parental involvement. Their work has influenced communication and shaped policy. For example, the school now produces an annual parental magazine celebrating Holy Cross's success and, through this, the school's policy on packed lunches has been refined.
- Systems to safeguard pupils are highly effective. Policies are thorough and reviewed regularly and partnerships with key local authority officers support this work fully.
- Performance management procedures are in place for all staff. They are closely aligned to the standards set out by government for all teachers, alongside targets for improving outcomes for pupils.
- A comprehensive programme of continuous training is in place that extends to all staff working in the school. It is well considered and meets the needs of both the school and the individual.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged children is used wisely to ensure that any gaps in outcomes between them and other pupils in the school are narrowing.
- The PE and sports grant is used to provide expert coaching to pupils in football and tennis. Links are made with several sporting clubs and several pupils have been identified to join the Lawn Tennis Association.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors share the same drive and determination for an outstanding school. They are clear in their ambition to be a centre of excellence and share the bilingual offer more widely.
 - Governors have an accurate view of the school's performance and undertake their statutory duties with diligence and commitment.
 - Governors have been fully involved in driving through improvements since the school's last inspection and recognise that their most significant role was the appointment of the executive headteacher.
 - They ensure that pupils are kept safe by a raft of policies and procedures that are evaluated regularly by the designated health and safety governor. They ensure essential safeguarding training and procedures are in place.
 - Minutes of the governing body reflect the level of support and challenge offered to leaders at the school and demonstrate governors' commitment to continuous improvement.
 - Governors new to the school are supported in their role. They are appointed according to their ability to fill the gaps identified from a skills analysis.
 - Governors know the amount of additional funds the school receives for both disadvantaged pupils and for improving the core offer for PE and sport. They know precisely how it is spent and the impact it has had.
 - Governors have ensured that performance management procedures are in place.
 - Governors have reconstituted and aligned their committee structure to meet the school's priorities and support them in fulfilling their statutory duties.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Relationships between pupils and teachers are a strength of the school. Pupils are confident to ask questions and offer contributions in lessons, because they know that Holy Cross and the bilingual school are safe places in which to learn.
- Teachers in both settings demonstrate secure subject knowledge and plan lessons to ensure that they meet the learning needs of pupils. Specialist teachers are used to enhance the offer to pupils. For example in the bilingual school pupils were immersed in a singing lesson maintaining three-part harmonies and rhythm.
- Teachers use questioning effectively to probe pupils' thinking and make checks on their understanding.
- All pupils receive a clear learning intention at the start of each lesson and a checklist for success. This enables all pupils to reflect on their learning and accurately assess their achievements. This practice is consistent in all subjects and across both schools.
- Teachers have addressed issues raised at the last inspection and marking is now effective and consistent across all year groups and in all subjects. It provides pupils with a prompt for improvement that, in the main, accurately pinpoints the next step in learning. Pupils routinely respond. It is evident within books

that this practice is secure.

- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is highly effective and well organised. Pupils use their knowledge to read and spell unfamiliar words accurately. Less fluent readers are also able to apply their skills well to decode unknown texts.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. Work sampled from the previous academic year showed that pupils made good gains in their knowledge and were provided with appropriate levels of challenge. Lessons observed saw consistent use of apparatus to support the development of early mathematical concepts and enable pupils to work independently.
- Teaching assistants working within classes provide effective and timely support to meet the learning needs of all pupils. They deliver a raft of intervention programmes with evident success.
- Homework is age appropriate and regular and both pupils and parents felt that it is 'just the right amount'.
- In most lessons, assessment information is used well, and activities are adapted to meet the needs and interests of pupils. This is not yet consistent in all classes, which means that some pupils do not make the progress they should within lessons.
- From work analysed and within lessons observed, too few opportunities were provided for pupils to deepen their knowledge and apply and refine their subject-specific skills. This was evident in most subjects, particularly science and mathematics.
- During the previous academic year, leaders worked with local authority staff to develop new approaches to assessment without levels. The systems are now being embedded across all classes. Further adjustment is required to allow those pupils already secure within their age-related expectations to demonstrate continued progress and the acquisition of subject mastery.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. All pupils are encouraged to share and be considerate of others. As one child in Reception class explained, 'Sharing is caring.'
- Inclusion leaders monitor the progress of pupils' personal and emotional well-being with the same rigour as their academic progress. They recognise that successful learners feel happy and safe; as a result, pupils have trust in the adults around them. Pupils said, 'All teachers are caring and supportive.'
- In both Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils have an acute awareness of risk, being healthy and staying safe, including internet safety.
- Systems within school enable pupils to understand how successful they are as learners. Pupils in Year 1 were able to articulate their enjoyment of school and expressed that they were good at their work.
- The school organises its own catering and menu choices. Lunchtime staff take time to discuss menu choices with the pupils. Accordingly, even the youngest pupils have a mature understanding of balanced diet and good food choices. A child from Reception explained that she loved broccoli, 'because it's important to eat my greens!'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are courteous and welcoming to visitors. They know the importance of good manners and readily hold doors open and say good morning. All pupils adhere to the uniform code.
- Pupils know what bullying is and know how important it is to report it. They understand all forms of bullying.
- Attendance for all pupils is high. However, there are some groups of pupils who have lower attendance rates than similar groups nationally. This is a concern for leaders, who have put systems in place to support these families to improve attendance rates and get pupils back into school.
- Playtimes are generally well organised, but building work has reduced the amount of space available in which pupils can play. When resources are not available, this leads to some overexcited behaviour.
- The behaviour code is applied consistently within school. Pupils know the rules are there to make everyone happy and safe in school. However, when asked pupils said that in some lessons not all pupils followed the code and this affects their learning. This is the case when the activities prepared do not maintain pupil interest. Pupils then become restless and go off task, and this impacts on the progress they make.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Results over time at Key Stage 1 have been significantly better than national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- At Key Stage 2, results from end-of-year tests demonstrate that outcomes for pupils are securely good, with almost all pupils reaching expected levels of attainment.
- Progress rates for some pupils have been less secure and at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015, fewer pupils made better than expected progress than had previously been the case. This is a result of underachievement identified at the time of the last inspection. As a result of action taken by leaders, underachievement has been halted and progress rates for this group of pupils accelerated.
- Outcomes for pupils currently in the school are good. The vast majority of pupils are working at age-related expectations and are making no less than expected progress from their starting points. This is the case across all subjects.
- Disadvantaged pupils are few in number, so statistical comparisons are unsound. However, within-school data indicate that their rates of progress are at least expected and in line with other pupils at the school.
- Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, and lower attaining pupils, are well supported. Each term, progress information is analysed in detail. Any pupils identified as having made limited or no progress receive intervention. This ensures that no child is left behind.
- Outcomes in the phonic screening checks are above national averages. Pupils who were heard to read demonstrated good understanding of the sounds letters make.
- Pupils read widely and often. There are a growing number of books within different genres for all pupils to access. The pupils heard to read expressed their enjoyment of books and spoke confidently about their favourite authors and the types of books they enjoyed reading. For less confident pupils, all were able to use reading skills to make sense of unfamiliar words and texts.

The early years provision

is good

- Children's skills and understanding when they join nursery are at least typical for their age, with a significant minority of children demonstrating skills beyond what is typical.
- In 2015, more children reached a good level of development than the national average, which was an improvement on 2014. Almost all children made at least expected progress from their starting points, with a significant minority making rapid progress.
- Children at the bilingual school only follow the English curriculum for half the week, so by the end of Reception their outcomes for a good level of development are slightly lower than their counterparts at Holy Cross. They make rapid gains once they have acquired a command of spoken English.
- Gaps between girls' and boys' outcomes have reduced considerably, as a result of engaging activities and focused adult intervention.
- Disadvantaged children reached a good level of development in line with pupils nationally and only slightly below their peers. All made expected progress from their starting points.
- Leaders recognise that their system for recording progress needs to be further developed and refined. This will allow them to identify more precisely the rates of progress made by those children whose skills on entry are above those typical for their age.
- By the time children leave Reception class, most of them have reached a good level of development and are ready for Year 1. Those children exceeding the good level of development were observed in Year 1 and are already making good progress against age-related expectations.
- Children in both Holy Cross and the bilingual school have daily access to outdoor learning. This offers a range of activities to extend children's development but in both settings does not cater fully to enhance the physical development needs of all pupils, particularly those of boys.

School details

Unique reference number	100345
Local authority	Hammersmith and Fulham
Inspection number	10001999

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	450
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Seanna Bengtsson
Headteacher	Kathleen Williams
Telephone number	0207 736 1447
Website	www.holycrossfulham.org.uk
Email address	admin@holycrossrc.lbhf@lgfl.net
Date of previous inspection	24–25 September 2013

Information about this school

- Holy Cross RC School is a larger than average sized primary school that has increased numbers considerably since its last inspection.
- Approximately one third of all pupils come from White British background, one third are from other White backgrounds and the remaining third are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for extra funding through the pupil premium has reduced significantly since 2012 and is now below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has halved since 2012 and is now below the national average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which sets the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- More pupils than in the majority of other primary schools join or leave part way through their primary education.
- The school has experienced considerable staff turnover since its previous inspection. As of September 2015, almost half of the teaching staff are new to the school and new to the profession.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed pupils' learning in 21 lessons and part lessons; several of these were joint observations with the senior leaders of the school.
- In addition, the inspection team looked at examples of pupils' work in folders and books from both this and the last academic year and listened to pupils read.
- There were meetings with groups of pupils: the headteacher, senior leaders, and members of the governing body and representatives of the local authority.
- The inspection team took account of 112 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View.
- The inspection team examined the school's own information on pupils' recent and current progress; the school's evaluation of how well it is doing and its records of monitoring the quality of teaching; records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Diane Buckle, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Birtles	Ofsted Inspector
Jeffery Quaye	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2015

