

St Elphege's RC Infant School

Mollison Drive, Roundshaw, Wallington, SM6 9HY

Inspection dates 2–3 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils make outstanding progress throughout the school and reach above-average levels of attainment.
- The school is very well led and managed. Leaders and managers at all levels are fully dedicated to high achievement and meeting the needs of all pupils. Strong systems and very effective monitoring ensure that all pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is outstanding. Lessons are very carefully planned and delivered to challenge pupils of all ability. Support by additional adults is well focused and results in strong learning for targeted pupils. Pupils' work is carefully assessed, but pupil awareness of their current learning and how to improve is not fully consistent across the school.
- Behaviour is outstanding. The very caring and supporting ethos of the school ensures that pupils know they are well valued and that they are safe at school. They always arrive at lessons ready to learn and very clearly enjoy their work. They support each other well and display excellent relationships.
- Social, moral, spiritual and cultural opportunities are a great strength of the school. The school's very strong Catholic ethos creates a strong feeling of community. It also helps pupils understand right from wrong and has a very positive impact on their behaviour. The school provides many opportunities, including the involvement of parents, for pupils to increase their cultural and spiritual understanding.
- The breakfast club enables pupils to start the day well. In a very caring environment, pupils are able to engage in learning and meet with friends.
- Governors are very effective in supporting and monitoring the school's work. They employ a range of skills and strategies to make sure that all pupils achieve well. Governors have also undertaken relevant training such as safeguarding, health and safety, use of data and finance to support their work.
- High-quality support is in place to support pupils with English as an additional language, disabilities and special educational needs and those supported through the pupil premium. As a result, they achieve very well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, of which 13 were joint observations with senior staff. They also observed a registration period, an assembly, start of school, break and lunchtimes and the breakfast club.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, representatives of the governing body and the local authority. The participation of parents in an assembly was also observed.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors took into account 27 responses from the online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own parent questionnaire and 27 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Michael Merva, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kenneth Bryan

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average infant school.
- Pupils come from a range of ethnic groups, the largest being White British, African and other Asian backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional support through the pupil premium, which is additional funding provided by the government for looked-after children, children entitled to free school meals and children of service families, is below average. There are no children of service families in the school and the only one in Reception is shortly leaving the school.
- The school provides a breakfast club every morning and a range of after-school clubs. The after-school clubs take place primarily on Fridays.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase further the high achievement of pupils and the proportion of outstanding lessons by:
- ensuring that pupil understanding of where they are in their current learning and how to improve is fully consistent across the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Pupils make outstanding progress in English and mathematics. From very low starting points on entry to the Nursery, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average. This is the case for all pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and those from different ethnic groups.
- Attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average. Pupils are confident and fluent readers. Effective support is given to pupils who find reading difficult, and skills gained in the Early Years Foundation Stage are well transferred into Key Stage 1.
- In a Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils were able to use phonics (linking letters to the sounds they make) skills acquired earlier to spell accurately. Pupils enjoy reading because of very effective support and the choice of interesting and stimulating books.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make outstanding progress. Many pupils enter the nursery at well below age-related skill levels. Very well-planned teaching, very accurate assessment and imaginative resources result in pupils leaving Reception with skill levels that are well above expectations.
- Progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is outstanding. The learning needs of pupils are very carefully defined and monitored to ensure effective support is deployed. As a result, it is well focused to engage all pupils to learn very well. In a Year 1 religious education lesson on the Holy Spirit, an additional adult employed an interesting and engaging range of strategies to support the learning of a pupil with speech and language needs. This support enabled the pupil to understand and to articulate the lesson concept well.
- Pupils entitled to support from funding provided by the pupil premium achieve very well. Strategies such as additional teaching support and access to additional learning opportunities, such as the breakfast club and visits, enable them to make progress in their learning and be fully involved in the life of the school. As a result of these strategies, the gap between the progress of these groups of pupils and that of their peers is narrowing quickly.
- The school's wide variety of learning opportunities allows pupils to excel beyond English and mathematics. In music, the school choir has performed to a very high standard, culminating in an appearance at the Royal Albert Hall.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding. This enables pupils to make and sustain excellent progress. The majority of lessons seen during the inspection were outstanding.
- Teaching is very carefully planned to cater for the needs of all pupils and time is well used to make sure all pupils are fully engaged in their learning. Work is well designed to allow for all pupils to fully engage in their work, and high expectations make sure they have the opportunity to extend their learning further.
- Questioning is well used to fully engage all pupils and help them all develop language skills. In a Reception numeracy lesson, pupils were able to very successfully explore the properties of three-dimensional shapes and to use specialist mathematical language. As a result of targeted questioning and modelling, they all made outstanding progress.
- Additional adults are very well used to support learning. They are well focused, with clear roles identified in planning. Additional adults are well trained and work with specific pupils who they know well. They use imaginative strategies to help pupils learn. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, the additional adult employed a range of strategies, including the use of the outdoor area, to support learning very effectively. This is an example of using successful early years practice to sustain strong progress and learning in Key Stage 1.
- Resources are very carefully prepared to support learning. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, both the indoor and outdoor learning areas are very well managed. They are well designed and

varied to meet the needs of all pupils, including for physical development.

- In a Year 2 mathematics lesson on addition, physical resources such as dice were used to enable one group of pupils to generate their numbers in an exciting and fun way. This resulted in very strong progress being made and a clear sense of enjoyment.
- Pupils' work is very carefully assessed during lessons to ensure that all pupils are learning well. Additional adults are very well employed to support this. Marking is generally of a high standard and teachers are well aware of individual pupils' progress. However, pupils' full understanding of their current progress and how to improve is variable across the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils always arrive at lessons ready to learn. They focus well on their work and demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning. They welcome more challenging tasks and demonstrate clear enjoyment of their learning. They support each other's learning very well. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils very enthusiastically engaged in paired discussion to check progress and help each other to learn.
- Views of parents in questionnaires are that behaviour is of a very high standard and there are no concerns about pupil safety. This is also endorsed by staff.
- Behaviour is well managed by the school. The Catholic and community ethos makes sure that pupils have clear examples of good behaviour and mutual respect. Rewards and sanctions are known to all and good behaviour is celebrated well. Pupils understand that 'Golden Time' is either increased or diminished in line with behaviour. One pupil said that the vast majority of pupils behave very well. The few that do not are 'dealt with well by adults'.
- Pupils behave extremely well around the school during lesson changes and at break and lunch times. They move safely between lessons and engage very well with each other at breaks and lunch time. They are very well supervised and are provided with a range of useful activities to positively engage them. A quiet area is also provided for those pupils who choose to use it.
- Pupils understand what bullying is and its various forms. For example, they are clear about what constitutes cyber and racist bullying. Pupils state that racism is unknown and that they are given guidance in internet safety. Pupils believe that bullying is very rare and are aware of how to seek help if required. They feel fully secure in the staff's ability to deal with it should it arise.
- They feel very safe and happy at school. One pupil said that 'the school is safe, even with lots of new buildings'. The school provides safety guidance for pupils such as road safety and stranger danger through assemblies and its personal, social and health education programme. As a result, they have a well-developed understanding of safe and unsafe situations.
- Attendance is above average and improving. It has improved significantly over previous years as a result of effective and concentrated strategies. These include close working with external agencies, engagement of parents and the celebration of good attendance through the school's 'Be There Bears' project and class attendance awards.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school's very strong Catholic ethos creates a very caring environment and a strong sense of community. There is a clear sense of belonging and working together to provide the best results for all pupils and support the growth of the whole child.
- Leadership and management are strong. The headteacher and senior leaders provide very clear guidance. Middle leaders are fully empowered to monitor the work of their areas. They understand their roles in the management structure and completely support the school's achievement goals.
- Teaching is very carefully monitored through a comprehensive range of strategies which include senior and middle leaders and governors. There are strong links between the school's evaluation of teaching and its performance management process, including pay progression and training

opportunities.

- The local authority provides light-touch support for this outstanding school. However, the school values its links with the local authority and uses its expertise to verify its own judgements, such as external verification of lesson observations.
- The curriculum is very creatively delivered to meet the needs of all pupils and to embed a range of key skills. For example, in a Year 1 religious education lesson, work on the gospels and Christ's disciples was very closely combined with the teaching of literacy, as it was in a Year 1 science lesson about life cycles.
- The curriculum supports the transition from Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 well. This makes sure that good practices in the Early Years Foundation Stage, including the use of language and physical activity, are continued in Key Stage 1. As a result, the school has successfully met its area for development from the previous inspection, demonstrating the capacity to improve.
- A wide range of opportunities are available to pupils to extend their learning. Good use is made of the local environment to increase pupils' learning experiences and develop their skills. For example, the botanical gardens at Wake Hurst Place allow Year 1 pupils to combine learning in geography, science and literacy. Lessons in cookery and golf also take place at a neighbouring restaurant and golf course.
- Safeguarding fully meets statutory requirements and its processes and procedures are well monitored by senior leaders and governors.
- A full range of policies are in place and regularly reviewed and monitored. They are also revised when a need is defined. For example, the school's marking policy is currently being reviewed to maintain and further effective assessment procedures.
- The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding. The provision is very carefully planned and monitored, with high expectations clearly evident. Assessment and links with parents are very strong. The effectiveness of its leadership and management results in outstanding pupil achievement at the end of Reception.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural opportunities abound and are very powerfully delivered. The school's introduction of the 'Come and See' religious education programme both consolidates tenets of the Catholic faith and the beliefs of other religions. Different cultures and beliefs are also accessed through visits from parents and religious groups. Links are established with Africa and Europe to generate global understanding and harmony.
- The school's strong community and inclusive ethos ensure the full involvement of parents. It is made clear that they are always welcome in the school and they are an integral part of many aspects of school life such as daily assemblies. They participate in the daily celebration of the Rosary and close links with families are established in the Early Years Foundation Stage to help support learning. Communication systems are comprehensive, including weekly newsletters, the school website and an active parents' association. Consultation meetings are very well attended, with special arrangements made for those parents who have difficulty in attending.
- The school is fully committed to equality of opportunity for all pupils. The welcoming and strong community environment and high expectations ensure that all pupils know they are valued and given every opportunity to succeed. Its highly effective teaching and support structure enable all groups of pupils to achieve very well.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors very carefully monitor the school's work. They are fully aware of the school's performance data and quality of teaching, sometimes by direct observation. The governing body is very well structured through its committees to make sure all aspects of the school are carefully considered. They closely monitor the staff targets and performance to make sure there is a clear relationship between classroom practice and salaries. They monitor and evaluate the use of funding available from the pupil premium. They are well aware of how it is used and its impact. Governors make sure that school finances are well used to improve all pupils' learning, especially in relation to additional teaching support and the school environment. They regularly review all school policies and ensure that they are being implemented. The governing body makes sure that the school meets its statutory

requirements for safeguarding and that effective risk assessments are in place. Governors have undertaken a comprehensive range of training to support their work. Examples include safeguarding, the Ofsted framework, attendance, health and safety, finance and the use of data to enhance their work.

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	102997
Local authority	Sutton
Inspection number	412112

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tom Tamplin
Headteacher	Frances Hawkes
Date of previous school inspection	11 January 2008
Telephone number	020 8669 6306
Fax number	020 8773 0789
Email address	stelphegesinfants@suttonlea.org

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