

St Aloysius' Catholic Primary School

143 Woodstock Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX2 7PH

Inspection dates

17–18 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
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

- Leaders and governors have acted decisively to bring about improvements since the previous inspection.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points because teaching is effective. Progress is particularly quick in reading because the teaching of phonics is good.
- Checks on teaching and learning are rigorous and systematic. Carefully tailored support and training, along with challenging targets, means that teachers' performance is developed effectively.
- Teaching is now good. Teachers plan activities that interest and engage pupils. All groups of pupils learn well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The curriculum covers an exciting range of subjects, topics and experiences. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, so that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. The curriculum interests and motivates pupils.
- The most able pupils are not consistently challenged, which means that they do not make the same progress from their starting points as others.
- In the early years, children are well cared for and make good progress. Teachers and teaching assistants develop children's skills effectively, leading imaginative learning and play activities skilfully.
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. They take pride in their work and their school.
- Pupils are safe, confident and well cared for. There are positive relationships with adults who know individual pupils well.
- Leaders, including governors, have grasped what needs to be done and have provided effective support to staff to improve teaching and learning.
- Pupils' writing skills have improved but are not as strong as their reading and mathematical skills. Pupils do not have enough times to write extended pieces of work often enough to allow them to improve their use of different structures and styles.
- Teachers do not consistently check that pupils are learning quickly enough. Consequently, the progress pupils make sometimes slows.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, by:
 - closely monitoring how well pupils are progressing in lessons so that if progress slows it is identified quickly
 - providing challenging work aimed at stretching the most able pupils to reach the highest standards
 - further raising standards in writing through opportunities for pupils to write extended pieces of work which allow them to use features such as different structures and styles.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance, precisely identifying areas of strength to celebrate and prioritising areas for development appropriately. These are communicated clearly to all parties involved, promoting a sense of collective responsibility. Leaders give teachers helpful and regular feedback on the strengths of their teaching and where they need to improve.
- All leaders, staff and governors share an ambition and determination to build on the strengths and improvements forged since the previous inspection to provide the best learning and personal experiences for pupils.
- The management of teacher's performance is used well to support this drive for continual improvement with targets that focus on school improvement priorities. Occasionally, recommended actions to help staff to reach their targets are not clear enough.
- Leaders carefully record and track pupils' progress so they are able to intervene early to prevent pupils from falling behind. This has helped all pupils to progress well, including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This reflects the school's commitment to ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed.
- Staff with specific responsibilities check carefully on teaching in their subjects. They follow up these checks with clear guidance, training and support. In this way, they have been successful in improving teaching and learning.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully. This means that the school is a calm, orderly environment where pupils with different backgrounds and from different cultures mix happily together. Pupils gain a good knowledge of the world and current issues through experiences such as lessons in a modern foreign language, and topic work and assemblies about world religions. This ensures that pupils are suitably prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils take part in a wide range of events and activities where they develop their understanding of British values. Pupils' understanding of British values is promoted well through, for example, learning about democracy when electing the school council and helping to make decisions about which resources to buy. Tolerance and respect are fostered very effectively through the school's mission to 'Be ambitious for the higher gifts.'
- The primary sport premium funding is used effectively and combined well with the local Cherwell Schools Partnership. It provides for specialist coaching, teaching and equipment that are enjoyed by all pupils. It is used effectively to increase teachers' expertise by working with a physical education specialist to develop their skills.
- The pupil premium funding successfully helps to provide additional support for eligible pupils in classrooms as well as helping with costs of activities such as school trips. Due to the good quality of this help, these pupils learn well and develop their knowledge with confidence, having had the same opportunities as other pupils.
- Leaders value the support and challenge they have been given during the regular visits

by local authority advisers who know the school well. There have been many opportunities for teachers to work with teachers from different schools. This support has helped the school improve since the last inspection.

- Parents are mostly positive about the work of the school. They say that teachers are approachable and that they ensure pupils behave well.

Governance of the school

- Governors provide a good balance of support and challenge to leaders. They are very well informed by the headteacher and their own monitoring work to enable them to do this. They have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and the key priorities for further development.
- Governors check the school's finances and ensure that money is spent wisely, including the pupil and sports premium. They link funding to priorities in the school development plan so that they can check that the school provides good value for money.
- Governors know how the performance of staff is managed to improve teaching, how this is aligned to pay progression and how any underperformance is tackled promptly and rigorously. They set challenging targets for the headteacher's performance.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are all well trained and knowledgeable about the potential risks to pupils and how to report and act upon concerns. Risk assessments are carefully maintained and appropriate, and arrangements for checking the suitability of staff are thorough. The school works successfully with its key partners to ensure that all pupils are safe and cared for well. The school helps pupils to understand the importance of adopting safe practices such as using the internet safely.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is effective, resulting in pupils making good and sometimes rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because school leaders have focused on improving teaching across the school and in different subjects.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge means that ideas are introduced and explained clearly and succinctly to pupils. Misunderstandings and misconceptions are usually either anticipated or addressed quickly. This knowledge also ensures that teaching and learning time is well used and lessons are structured carefully so that pupils learn step by step to increase their knowledge and understanding.
- Assessment and feedback is thorough, regular and provides pupils with a good understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. Teachers highlight errors or identify weaker mathematical strategies rigorously and provide time for pupils to successfully reshape, correct or improve their work. One pupil highlighted the significance of this by saying, 'It allows you to reflect on your work and do it better next time.'
- The teachers and teaching assistants work very well together in a culture of mutual

support and strong teamwork. Staff are good role models for pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants question pupils well but do not use responses from pupils to always precisely check on learning and pick up any gaps in knowledge. There are also times when staff do not check how quickly pupils are progressing and as a result do not identify quickly enough if progress slows.

- Teaching assistants provide good support to pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They plan work and activities that are broken down so that these pupils can manage and build on previous learning. This ensures that new ideas are quickly grasped and understood.
- There is a strong and very successful emphasis on teaching phonics. Pupils read regularly and quickly become fluent and confident readers due to the well-organised teaching of reading skills. They enjoy their reading across a wide range of literature and speak knowledgeably about different authors. There are good opportunities to develop spelling skills in other subjects, particularly when spelling unfamiliar subject-specific vocabulary.
- The teaching of writing is generally effective, and ensures that pupils practise their writing skills across other subjects. For example, pupils write frequently in history and science about different themes and topics. The presentation of their work in books is good and shows that they usually take pride in their work.
- Pupils write with enthusiasm and have a good range of prompts that motivate them to write about different themes. However, there are limited times for pupils to sustain the quality of their writing in longer pieces of work.
- Good teaching in mathematics ensures that pupils grasp concepts quickly and are able to solve a range of problems. Teachers use and explain mathematics vocabulary well so that pupils understand more clearly what they are trying to do. For example, Year 2 pupils were adept at solving problems because they followed the step-by-step method that was explained well.
- There are good working relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils are very enthusiastic and enjoy answering teachers' questions. Most pupils have to think deeply because comments during discussions are 'bounced' from one pupil to another by the teacher so that pupils have to justify or can challenge comments made by others.
- Teachers' planning typically stems from pupils' needs, abilities and interests. Exciting projects are most often well matched to pupils' capabilities and take due note of their learning styles. Consequently, pupils are motivated and supported to learn.
- Challenge for pupils is usually effective. There are times when the most able pupils do not make fast enough progress because they do not have to work or think in enough depth. This means that their progress is not always fast and the standards they reach are not sufficiently high.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel safe in school because they are confident that adults take care of them. Adults act as good role models for pupils and, consequently, pupils are generally well mannered and courteous. Pupils are friendly and welcoming to visitors.
- Arrangements for the reporting of concerns about pupils' welfare and for the support of vulnerable pupils are effective and rigorous. Records of actions are well maintained, and close liaison with other agencies ensures that support is timely and effective.
- Pupils are clear that bullying and derogatory or aggressive language are very rare and not tolerated. Pupils are knowledgeable about the different forms that bullying can take, such as physical bullying, racism or cyber bullying.
- Pupils are well informed, understanding the risks of modern technology. A keen knowledge of how to stay safe is evident but pupils also appreciate the value that information technology adds to their lives.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Pupils have good opportunities to take on extra responsibilities, for example as 'buddies' for younger pupils. Pupils also learn to take responsibility and consider their role in wider society. They help others by raising funds for charities and this helps them to empathise with people living in poverty and unhealthy homes.
- Despite personal development being good, there are times when a small minority of pupils do not behave in the way the school would expect them to.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are typically positive as they usually find the work interesting and engaging. Consequently, they move quickly to start work and rarely need reminding to focus their attention. However, not all pupils display consistently positive attitudes in lessons; some lose focus and concentration, which slows the progress they make.
- Pupils cooperate well most of the time and settle quickly to work without any fuss. They have a very high regard for the school and its aims.
- Teachers apply the school's behaviour policy consistently, and so pupils understand and respond to their expectations. Pupils respect staff and understand the importance of rules and guidelines. They understand the importance of learning and they want to do well.
- Pupils are courteous, respectful and friendly. In lessons, pupils listen attentively and work well on their own and in pairs or small groups. They appreciate the support of their teachers.

- At different times of the school day pupils behave sensibly. They line up in an orderly fashion when playtimes have finished and move along the corridors and around the school very calmly.
- All groups of pupils want to come to school and attend well. The proportion of current pupils who are persistently absent is below the national average. Parents and the school have worked well in partnership to secure overall attendance rates that exceed national standards. Rare incidences of poorer attendance are tackled effectively.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- From their various starting points, pupils are making good progress. Since the previous inspection, due to improvements in teaching, pupils' progress has increased in all subjects. Pupils' work in their books and the school's information about their progress shows that pupils currently in the school make particularly good progress in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' attainment has risen. Most pupils reach the expected standards at the end of key stage 1 and at key stage 2 some exceed this. The school's own assessment information shows that standards are continuing to rise. This is evident in the work in pupils' books.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of this group making more than expected progress in all subjects exceeded that of other pupils nationally, providing further evidence of positive outcomes for pupils. Data held by the school shows that achievement gaps between these pupils and other pupils nationally are rapidly closing, as support has been more effectively targeted towards specific curriculum areas.
- Disadvantaged pupils who are most able achieve well. They make good gains in knowledge and understanding. This results in confident and fluent readers and pupils who are adept at manipulating and investigating numbers and shapes.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They learn well because support is targeted and planned well. Additional programmes and support are structured to balance what pupils know already and what they need to improve. There is also well-planned support that has made sure that lower-attaining pupils' standards are improving and most are making expected progress from their starting points.
- The most able pupils show a higher level of knowledge, understanding and skills. The level of challenge, however, is inconsistently provided. This means that the most able pupils sometimes do not make quick progress from their starting points.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve well. Staff know their current skill levels and make sure that this moves their learning forwards quickly through a wide range of interesting tasks. Much thought is also given to making sure that there are clear connections between lessons.
- Outcomes for pupils across year groups in reading are especially positive. In discussing and reading texts with pupils, fluency and comprehension skills are developing well. Having been prioritised by school leaders as an area for improvement and thereby

promoted, reading is valued by parents and pupils as a cornerstone for learning.

- Pupils write well across different subjects. However, pupils' skills in writing at length are not sufficiently embedded. This limits the standards that pupils reach and the challenge for pupils in using advanced writing features consistently in their writing.
- Pupils' grammar, spelling and punctuation are of a good standard. They are confident speakers and are good at listening, because they routinely discuss their ideas together in lessons.
- Achievement in mathematics has improved. Work in pupils' books shows that they have a good understanding of basic calculation. Pupils' abilities to apply their knowledge to solving problems are increasing.
- Pupils of all ages use a range of information technology well to support their learning. They are adept at using tablet computers for activities such as researching information or creating stories.
- Most parents are positive about the progress of pupils. They appreciate the support that is offered in order to help pupils reach their full potential.

Early years provision

Good

- A majority of children join Reception with skills and knowledge that are slightly below those typical for their age. By the end of Reception, all children including disadvantaged children have made good progress from their starting points and enter Year 1 as confident learners.
- Children reach a good level of development that is above average. This is because staff know children well and they provide activities that build on what children can do. Children reach good skills in phonics and this helps them to develop early reading and writing skills.
- Classrooms are bright and attractive and resourced with toys and equipment that are of good quality. The outdoor area complements the indoor area, with activities planned to successfully develop children's skills across all areas of learning.
- Teachers use assessment information accurately to plan next steps in learning and ensure that tasks make children think hard. A record of their achievements at school and at home is made throughout the year. Parents and children especially like the opportunity to share special and memorable achievements from home and class activities.
- Teaching is good. There is an appropriate balance of activities that children choose for themselves with those that are led by adults. Teachers and teaching assistants challenge children's thinking well to help them develop their language and social skills.
- Children's progress is not as rapid as it might be because staff do not consistently develop children's understanding by encouraging them to think and articulate fuller answers.
- Adults ensure that children have many opportunities to develop good social skills. Children's behaviour is good, as seen by the way they play cooperatively together, either in small groups or on a one-to-one basis.

- Good leadership has created a cohesive staff team. Staff undertake regular training so that the quality of their work is effective and continually improving. For example, parents praise the effective arrangements for starting school that ensure children settle quickly into their new routines.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the progress the children are making and monitor it closely. For example, in Reception the progress being made in numeracy is recorded in detail in all children's books and on assessment software by the teacher, and photographs sit alongside the children's own written and practical work.
- Staff ensure that all the safeguarding requirements are met. They ensure that children are kept safe inside and outside and learn how to keep themselves safe.

School details

Unique reference number	123218
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10019891

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Felicity Staveley-Taylor
Headteacher	Tom Walker
Telephone number	01865 311056
Website	www.staloysius.net
Email address	office.3842@st-aloysius.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 October 2014

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 majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in 11 lessons, visiting each class in the school to contribute to their evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Observations were also conducted jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also observed small-group sessions.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, school leaders, teachers, representatives of the local authority, governors and various groups of pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documentation, including that relating to policies, the minutes of governing body meetings, self-evaluation, pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance data, and a wide range of pupils' work across different subjects.
- Inspectors considered the views of 52 parents who expressed responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and two letters from parents. Discussions were also held with parents as they brought pupils to school.

Inspection team

Richard Blackmore, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kusum Trikha	Ofsted Inspector

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