

Our Lady and St Philomena's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131837
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	341228
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2010
Reporting inspector	David Law

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	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Sheila Jones
Headteacher	Ms Maria Michniewski
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2006
School address	Sparrow Hall Road Liverpool Merseyside L9 6BU
Telephone number	0151 5258552
Fax number	0151 5232499
Email address	philomenas-ht@ourlady-st-philomenas.liverpool.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2010
Inspection number	341228

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 Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, 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.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 19 lessons involving 10 teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff and a representative from the local authority. They observed the school's work and looked at the improvement plan, school policies, safeguarding documents and evidence from school self-evaluation. Account was taken of teachers' curriculum planning and their assessments of pupils' progress. Samples of pupils' books were also reviewed. Inspectors evaluated the views of parents and carers by analysing 59 questionnaires returned by them. Questionnaires from 101 pupils and 13 staff were also evaluated.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The progress pupils make in English, particularly the standards they reach in writing, including their ability to spell, punctuate and form their handwriting.
- Teachers' use of assessment to plan learning, and how well it matches pupils' different abilities, needs and interests.
- Information about current levels of attendance and how effective the school is in reducing persistent absence.

Information about the school

This is an above average sized primary school. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is above average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, although there are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The percentages of pupils from minority ethnic groups, or who speak English as an additional language, are below average. The school has achieved Healthy School Status, Activemark, Artsmark and the Eco-Schools Bronze Award. In addition, the school has gained the Schools Enterprise Challenge Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and achievement is satisfactory. It has a number of good features. There is a welcoming ethos and care, guidance and support are good. Pupils are happy, behave well and are respectful of others. They feel safe and procedures for keeping them safe are good. Pupils are eager to take responsibility and their contribution to the school and the wider community is good, for example as members of the school council. There are good partnerships to promote learning and well-being including links with the church and local schools. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and enjoy participating in various sports.

The progress of all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy learning and are keen to do their best. They make steady gains in acquiring mathematical skills but achievement in English, although satisfactory, is not as strong. Pupils gain a sound knowledge of reading strategies but progress in writing is not as brisk. Pupils are rarely confident in using writing skills across the curriculum and too few are secure in their spelling and handwriting abilities. Pupils enjoy using computers and working cooperatively. They receive a satisfactory preparation for their future economic well-being. Recent improvements have brought attendance to average levels and the school is working hard to sustain this. Teaching is satisfactory and strengths include the positive relations in all classrooms and teachers' use of subject knowledge. In some lessons, time is not used well, pupils are too passive and consequently learning slows. Assessment is not always used to match learning to individual needs and marking does not consistently show pupils how to improve. The satisfactory curriculum promotes pupils' personal development through a rich range of activities in sport and music.

Leaders and managers are well motivated, work as a team and are sufficiently ambitious in wanting the best for all pupils. Members of the governing body visit the school regularly and provide both support and challenge. The capacity to sustain improvement is satisfactory. Monitoring and evaluation are mainly accurate, although the school has too optimistic a view of the quality of teaching. There is a satisfactory drive for improvement. The headteacher provides firm direction and others share in the leadership by contributing to self-evaluation and improvement planning. Priorities for improvement are relevant and there is evidence of impact, for example in improved attendance. The school makes a good contribution to promoting community cohesion and pupils from all backgrounds get on well together. Good relations with parents and carers underpin their strong support.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in English by:

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

- providing opportunities for pupils to use their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills across the curriculum
 - enabling pupils to acquire confidence and skill in handwriting, spelling and punctuation
 - helping pupils to know and understand their personal targets and how they can improve.
- Improve consistency in the quality of teaching and the use of assessment so more of it is good or better by:
 - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve and increasing the pace of learning
 - providing more practical learning where pupils are actively engaged
 - using assessment more effectively to match learning to pupils' needs
 - ensuring the marking of pupils' work is of consistent quality in helping them to know how they can improve.
 - Further improve attendance, so that it is sustained at average levels or above by rigorously tracking and supporting the most persistent absentees and their families.
 - Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils are eager to learn and this, together with their good behaviour, helps them to make satisfactory progress in their lessons. They listen carefully to instructions, try their best and work well together in small groups, often showing good enjoyment. For example, in Year 4 pupils thoroughly enjoyed working in groups to discuss what was fact and opinion about Roman Britain; Year 5 pupils made significant gains in their French as they participated enthusiastically in a lively lesson.

Most pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with attainment below the expected levels, particularly in their language skills. They make a brisk start in Nursery but progress in Reception, although satisfactory, is slower. Most enter Year 1 with reading and writing skills below those expected but other areas of learning are in line with expectation or above. There is satisfactory progress overall through Key Stages 1 and 2 but it is good in lessons where teaching is stronger. Attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2010 was broadly average, although better in mathematics than English. Currently, across the school it is broadly average although below in writing in most classes. Many pupils find it difficult to write at length, and for different purposes across the curriculum. Pupils' learning and progress are quicker where work is well matched to their needs. There are no significant differences in the progress of various groups and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Pupils are tolerant and treat each other respectfully; their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' satisfactory achievement, good behaviour and positive attitudes provide a sound platform for the next stage of their education.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is of satisfactory quality. Where it is at its best, practical activities are used well to stimulate interest and lessons are carefully planned to engage all pupils. Technology is used well, for example, to teach phonic skills or present information. Classrooms are well organised with lively displays of pupils' work. However, too often pupils are not active in their learning because teachers spend too much time explaining or allocating tasks. As a result, the pace of learning is too slow. Too often, work is not matched well enough to personal needs and pupils of different abilities are given the same activities so the more able are not sufficiently challenged and others find work too difficult. Marking is completed regularly and praises pupils' efforts but does not consistently show them what to improve. The curriculum is satisfactory and helps pupils to make expected progress and there is good provision for enriching pupils' experience. This includes numerous visits and opportunities to learn both French and Spanish. Good care, guidance and support make effective provision for pupils facing challenging circumstances, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This ensures they participate in learning and develop well personally. Links with external support agencies are strong. There are good procedures to ensure a smooth transition into the Early Years Foundation Stage and to secondary education. Systems are securely in place to ensure regular attendance as seen in the recent success in reducing persistent absence.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

All leaders and managers are well motivated and show a strong commitment to pupils' personal development and well-being. Senior leaders ensure regular self-review of provision and outcomes, for example, by using systems to track pupils' progress, and leaders at all levels make a valuable contribution. Subject leaders work cooperatively to monitor and evaluate achievement; they contribute to improvement planning and professional development. Meetings take place to review how well pupils are doing. These meetings are not systematic enough in the way they use evidence of pupils' progress in lessons to target strategies for improvement, for example, by revising teaching methods. The governing body provides satisfactory challenge and support and has a clear commitment to pupils, their families and the community. The school promotes community cohesion effectively because it knows its context well and there are good opportunities to learn about the range of cultures in Britain and elsewhere. All pupils have an equal opportunity to learn and there is no discrimination. They show a good understanding of how to keep safe and procedures for safeguarding are good because there is effective training and staff roles are clearly defined. The budget is managed efficiently and, taking account of the outcomes for pupils, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. In most years, children enter the Nursery with skills below those expected at this age, particularly in language skills. All children make at least satisfactory progress in their learning and enjoy what they do. Progress is brisk in the nursery and the outdoor environment is used particularly well. In contrast, children in Reception have too little opportunity to learn outdoors. All children develop their independence and learn how to manage daily routines well. Behaviour is good and children share, cooperate and play well with others. Adults have a secure knowledge of the development of young children. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and consistently good in the Nursery. There is thorough assessment through observation of children learning and this informs planning for what they should learn next. Relationships between adults and children are warm and positive. Appropriate strategies are in place to involve parents and carers. Induction systems are good. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Adults work together as a team and there are sound opportunities for professional development. Routines are efficient and things run smoothly day-to-day.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation	3

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Stage	
-------	--

--

Views of parents and carers

All parents and carers feel the school keeps their children safe and helps them to have a healthy lifestyle. Almost all say their children enjoy school and are well prepared for the future. A small minority feel that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found behaviour to be good and that the school deals well with rare instances when this is not the case. Similarly, a small minority say the school does not take account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors found that the school has suitable systems in place to enable parents and carers to express their concerns and some parents wrote to inspectors to say how friendly and approachable they felt the staff to be.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Our Lady and St Philomena's Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 235 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	67	20	30	1	2	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	46	70	20	30	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	34	52	30	45	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	45	33	50	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	52	29	44	3	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	45	31	47	4	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	48	33	50	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	32	48	30	45	1	2	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	48	30	45	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	50	27	41	4	6	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	39	35	53	3	5	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	28	42	35	53	1	2	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	56	25	38	4	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



12 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady and St Philomena's Catholic Primary School, Liverpool, L9 6BU

The other inspectors and I enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for making us welcome. You contributed well to the inspection by being eager to talk with us. We found that your school is providing you with a satisfactory education. We saw that you enjoy being at school and these are some of the things we think you do well.

- You are helpful to each other and your behaviour is good.
- Adults take good care of you and you say you feel safe in school.
- You have a good understanding of how to live a healthy life, for example, by taking exercise and eating fruit and vegetables.
- You enjoy taking responsibility, for example, by being members of the school council.

We have three recommendations to help you improve further and these are.

- We want you to achieve even more in English, for example, by using writing skills in other subjects and continuing to improve your spelling, punctuation and handwriting.
- We would like teachers to plan lessons where you can be active in your learning, use assessment to provide work that really meets your needs and mark your work to show you what needs to improve.
- Your attendance has improved recently (well done!) but we want to see this continue so have asked the school to keep a careful check on it.

I hope you will work hard to bring about these improvements. Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr David Law
Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.