

Our Lady of Lourdes RC School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101331
Local Authority	Barnet
Inspection number	354982
Inspection dates	25–26 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Marshall

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	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pauline Woolford
Headteacher	Marybelle Morrissey
Date of previous school inspection	15 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons, observed eight teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, school leaders and representatives of the governing body. They looked at school documentation including policies, pupils' progress data, attendance figures and the school's improvement planning. They also scrutinised pupils' work and evaluated 62 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of the school's strategies for improving the learning and progress for all pupils, particularly in writing.
- The use staff make of assessment information to support and challenge pupils' learning, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.
- The effectiveness of leaders in checking, reviewing and taking actions to improve teaching and pupil progress in order to secure consistently high standards and good achievement.

Information about the school

Our Lady of Lourdes is an average sized primary school. The children come from both White British families and a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds. Almost a third of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is average and represents a range of needs. In some years this proportion can rise to above average with over half the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school has gained a number of awards including the ICT Mark, the International Award, Healthy School accreditation and the PE Active Schools Mark as well as being awarded Silver for their Travel Plan.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Since the last inspection, staff and governors have worked hard to maintain the tremendously high levels of care, guidance and support provided for pupils. There is a very strong focus on every aspect of the school's pastoral care which ensures that pupils and their families are extremely well supported. All staff work effectively to ensure that pupils achieve very well in their learning and develop exceptionally as mature and caring individuals. Pupils have exceptional moral and social skills, and their spiritual and cultural awareness is excellent. They are extremely considerate of each other, valuing and celebrating each other's differences. This helps to make the school very safe and welcoming. Outstanding attendance reflects the pupils' enormous enthusiasm for school and learning. Their keenness to attend school, along with their ability to work really well together from an early age and excellent achievement, are key factors in pupils' particularly strong development of workplace skills.

Pupils' achievement is excellent because the school adapts its exceptional curriculum particularly well to ensure that every individual's needs are met and all pupils fulfil their potential. This, along with outstanding teaching, enables pupils to make excellent progress from their starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage to when they leave. All staff know the pupils' abilities extremely well. This is because of the highly effective checks regularly made on their progress and the considerable skill with which the school adapts and targets the well-focused support it gives individual pupils. Teachers and other adults mark pupils' work alongside them and discuss the next steps in their learning consistently and regularly. As a result, pupils have a very good understanding of what they are working on next and how to get better.

While achievement is high, the headteacher, staff and the governing body are constantly looking for ways to improve pupils' attainment and personal development further. Consequently, they are leading the school's drive to raise pupils' contribution to the community and community cohesion from good to outstanding. The school has begun to establish links within the United Kingdom to enable pupils to gain a greater understanding of the diversity of cultures that exist and provide pupils with more opportunities to be involved in projects making a difference to their local community. Already established and exceptionally strong links to countries all over the world as well as within the school's own community are examples of the school's success in these areas but it acknowledges that there is further work to be done. This constant striving to reflect on outstanding practice and still look for ways to improve, together with leaders' highly accurate self-evaluation and actions to maintain and build upon the high levels of pastoral care seen at the time of the last inspection, show the school has an excellent capacity for further improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the school strategy for community cohesion and for promoting pupils' contribution to the wider community by creating more opportunities for pupils:
 - to appreciate and value people's backgrounds in the United Kingdom
 - to be involved in projects that improve their local community.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Across the school pupils achieve extremely well in their personal and social development. Their behaviour is exemplary, both in lessons and at play, where they show considerable support for one another regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. Their understanding of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle is excellent. This is demonstrated well through their high take-up of physical activity in the many available clubs and sporting activities, making the most of the opportunities to exercise at playtimes and the highly successful campaign by the eco-council to encourage pupils to walk to school. Pupils of all ages talk confidently about the benefits this can bring and are quick to explain the healthy choices they make in what they eat and do. Because of the school's very strong focus on its Catholic ethos and pastoral care, pupils contribute particularly well to the school community. This is demonstrated well through their involvement in how the school is run, participating enthusiastically in the school and eco councils as well as willingly taking on responsibilities such as playground buddies, librarians and running clubs for the younger children. Opportunities to make a difference in their wider local community are less frequent and comparatively underdeveloped. However, there have been noticeable successes in the past such as the pupils' work to champion the nearby slip road, improving road safety for all.

Pupils also achieve extremely well academically. They are clear about their learning and frequently talk with confidence about this, sharing their ideas willingly. During a literacy session on instructional writing, pupils in Year 5 were keen to talk to their partners and consider the merits of the instructions they had just followed to create gingerbread for Henry VIII. Because of the practical nature of the task they were able to confidently discuss the shortcomings of the instructions they had been given and contributed their own suggestions about how these could be improved. Pupils of all ages talk eagerly about what they have been learning and know they have targets that help them to improve. The trend in attainment in the Year 6 national tests over the last three years has been consistently high with the current Year 6 also on track to meet their above average targets. Over time, pupils make outstanding progress from starting points that are below expected levels as they enter the school. The school ensures different groups and individuals, such as those at the early stages of learning English, are very well targeted enabling them to learn extremely effectively and achieve well. Consequently, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make the same excellent progress.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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?

Pupils' tremendous keenness to learn is due in a large part to the exceptionally creative curriculum and consistently high quality teaching. The extremely well made links between subjects in particular, as well as tremendously engaging visits making the most of their London location, help to bring the curriculum alive. The creative links these bring between subjects help to stimulate and foster pupils' considerable interest and provide further opportunities to challenge and stretch their learning. The programme of out-of-school activities for pupils is strong. Clubs very effectively promote pupils' positive relationships and encourage healthy lifestyles. Pupils' welfare and personal, social and health needs are catered for extremely well because the school works exceptionally closely with parents and carers as well as outside agencies where needed.

All staff play their part in delivering this rich, stimulating and engaging curriculum. Some of the key features of the outstanding teaching seen across the school are: the very good relationships adults have with children; the particularly well-targeted use of highly trained additional adults both in class and in leading small groups; very effective behaviour management; and the highly effective questioning adults use to extend and challenge pupils' learning. In two Year 6 mathematics lessons, pupils of all abilities were targeted extremely well ensuring they developed their understanding of equivalent fractions very effectively. One group worked enthusiastically using chocolate bars to consider how best to divide and share them fairly. Consequently, their grasp of fractions, proportions and the

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importance of factors in their calculations grew rapidly. Assessment is very thorough and is used extremely effectively to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. During lessons, adults regularly discuss with pupils just how they can improve their work. Consistently evaluative marking in literacy, numeracy and religious education helps pupils understand the next small steps needed to improve their learning and achieve their targets and, as a result, progress is accelerated. Boys and girls alike are fully engaged. Since the last inspection the school has been successful in improving provision and outcomes in mathematics, while also strengthening achievement in writing. The basic skills of information and communication technology are very effectively developed also.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior management team, supported exceptionally well by other leaders including the governing body, provide a clear vision for how the school can move forward. There is a tremendously positive spirit and a real team atmosphere of 'can do'. As part of the school's extremely effective development planning, leaders at all levels are positively encouraged to take on responsibilities. They are highly involved in analysing the school's results and checking teaching to see where it is most effective in order to share good practice and identify where improvements are needed. As a result, leaders have an exceptionally clear understanding of the school's overall strengths and weaknesses. Governance has an excellent capacity for checking and influencing the school's work and effectiveness. It has been instrumental in ensuring that considerable efforts are made by the school to increasingly involve parents and carers in every aspect of the school's work. These extremely strong links are another of the contributory factors to the school's outstanding success. The expertise of leaders and staff is shared with other schools, both nationally and internationally, to help improve their effectiveness.

All staff play their part in ensuring that safeguarding procedures are rigorous, constantly checking to ensure exemplary practice is maintained across all areas, including those for safe recruitment, assessing risk and for child protection. The school's promotion of equality and diversity is excellent; staff ensure that there is no discrimination between groups so that all pupils have opportunities to flourish individually and achieve exceptionally well. Leaders have been particularly effective in promoting community cohesion at a school level. Their remarkably strong links with other schools across the globe are recognised both locally and nationally, with the school regularly asked to share their experiences and successes. Established links with a village in Suffolk are starting to be developed to include the local school. The school is aware of the need to develop these further in order to ensure that pupils can engage well and gain a deeper understanding of

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the backgrounds of others from different parts of the United Kingdom. Similarly they have plans to provide more regular opportunities for pupils to be involved in projects that make a difference to their own wider local community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage grow quickly in confidence, becoming keen learners by the time they enter Year 1. Children make good and often rapid progress from below expected levels when they join the nursery, especially in those areas where their skills are weaker. They enter Year 1 with average attainment. The curriculum is adapted extremely effectively to engage and enthuse learners in all they do with a well-balanced mixture of activities led by staff and those chosen by the children themselves. Staff are particularly successful in creating rich and stimulating surroundings where the transition between learning indoors and outside is seamless. Teaching is outstanding and the children develop rapidly in all aspects of their personal and social development. Adults are skilled at moving on children's learning through extremely good quality interventions as they play. As part of their work on the story, *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, a group of children in the outdoor area talked animatedly about how to follow directions from photographs on their treasure map as a result of an adult's effective questioning. Others programmed a robot to follow instructions for another map, while another group designed and drew their own. Highly effective planning ensured that the rest of the learning environment provided a wealth of other opportunities for the children to develop in all aspects of their learning all linked to the one story. Staff work very well with parents and carers to ensure there are really good levels of communication and the children get off to a good start. Regular opportunities to share children's learning and achievements have been developed well to give parents and carers a real understanding of how they can help their children's development through everyday activities. Led extremely effectively by the

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Early Years Foundation Stage leader, the whole team uses assessment particularly well to promote learning and is able to demonstrate the good gains that children make in all areas of learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of questionnaires received were positive and almost all of the written comments expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. They commended the safe and caring attitude of the school, its support for pupils and how well their children are encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles. Typical comments about the school included, 'Every child is made to feel special and valued' and that pupils are '... engaged, enthusiastic, well cared for and challenged'.

A very small minority of parents and carers reported concerns over how the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. Evidence gathered during the inspection showed that opportunities to discuss concerns with the school were very well established with parents and carers, some of whom commented positively on this aspect of the school's work in their questionnaires. The governing body and school regularly seek their views in order to continually develop communication further, adding to the already well-established system of parent representatives and many other opportunities for informal discussions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Our Lady of Lourdes RC 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 62 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 236 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	79	12	19	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	44	71	15	24	3	5	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	34	55	25	40	2	3	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	48	27	44	3	5	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	35	56	26	42	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	52	27	44	0	0	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	56	26	42	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)	26	42	27	44	4	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	35	34	55	5	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	58	22	35	3	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	58	25	40	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	58	25	40	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	55	25	40	0	0	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.



29 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady of Lourdes RC School, London N12 0JP

Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited. We were pleased to hear how much you enjoy coming to school and that your teachers plan such a lot of interesting things for you to do. You get on extremely well with one another and your behaviour around school is first rate. You have an excellent understanding of how to be safe and lead a healthy lifestyle. We agree that there are lots of interesting visitors to your school and activities to get involved in and were especially impressed with how well you get to know other pupils from all over the world. We understand why you think the adults are very good at helping to make you feel really safe and cared for.

Your school is outstanding. The curriculum planned for you meets your needs extremely well. Teachers and other adults are very good at helping you to make excellent progress in your work. The leaders in your school run it particularly well. They know just what needs to be done to make it even better.

In order to help make your school become even better we have asked the adults at your school to work on one thing:

- to help you to understand more about different people's backgrounds and communities in other parts of this country as well as giving you more opportunities to make a real difference in your own.

You can help by continuing to respect each other's values, both in this school and in later life. Thank you for helping us with our work.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Marshall

Lead inspector

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