

Our Lady of Good Help Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104670
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	355614
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Michael McIlroy HMI

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	156
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Nick Henwood
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Horncastle
Date of previous school inspection	22 November 2007
School address	South Drive Wavertree, Liverpool Merseyside L15 8JL
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Inspectors observed 14 lessons involving eight teachers and met with nominated staff, two groups of pupils, and two representatives of the local authority. A telephone conversation was held with the Chair of the Governing Body and with the leader of a local partnership with whom the school works. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at its development planning, safeguarding documentation and its systems for tracking the progress of pupils. Inspectors also scrutinised 27 parental questionnaires that were received by the end of the inspection as well as pupil and staff questionnaires.

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

- What the progress of pupils is, including that of those with special education needs and/or disabilities, especially in mathematics.
- Whether the care, guidance and support provided are outstanding as the school judges.
- The quality of the contribution pupils make to the school and the wider community.
- How effectively the school promotes equal opportunity and tackles discrimination.
- How effective leaders and managers at all levels are in tackling underachievement.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average, as is that of pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups is below average, as is the percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language. A higher than average number of pupils joins the school at times other than normal admission times.

The school holds several awards including the Activemark and Healthy School status.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Its chief strengths lie in the very good care it provides and in pupils' overall outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which has improved since the last inspection. Children enter the school with skills and abilities below those expected. Following a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress in their learning. By the end of their time in school, pupils leave with average attainment in English and mathematics which means that their achievement is good. Results are stronger in English than in mathematics, partly because more-able pupils are not always fully challenged in mathematics lessons, and because the school has focused strongly on developing well aspects of English, such as writing and its assessment, since the last inspection. Contributing to the good progress of pupils is good teaching, which is underpinned by effective use of assessment which ensures that pupils know well what it is they have to do next to improve. The good curriculum, which provides good opportunities for writing in other subjects, also promotes pupils' good achievement and cultural understanding.

Pupils enjoy school and feel safe in school. Their behaviour is good and they are polite and considerate to visitors and each other. They know well how to lead a healthy lifestyle and they make a good contribution to the development of their school and to their local community. The care, guidance and support pupils receive are good overall. As well as being very well cared for, pupils are well supported in their learning. They receive good guidance on behaviour, but strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality are no better than satisfactory in their impact. As a result, despite some recent signs of improvement, pupils' attendance, including that of those who have recently joined the school is low, and too many pupils arrive late for the start of the school day.

Leadership and management of the school are good. School leaders have worked well together as a team to address the issues identified by the previous inspection successfully and know what the school must focus on to improve further. There are good partnerships with a local network of schools and external agencies which contribute well to pupils' good progress and the good support they receive. There are also good partnerships with parents and carers. One spoke of the school's 'family' atmosphere which reflects both its Catholic ethos and the very good care it provides for pupils. Good development planning, based on generally accurate self-evaluation, the successful tackling of issues identified at the last inspection, improvements in outcomes for pupils and their sustained good achievement, indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in mathematics by:

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- ensuring that teachers' planning and activities in lessons consistently challenge more-able pupils
 - developing mathematical displays
 - developing day-to-day marking procedures in mathematics so as to provide pupils with more guidance on how to improve
 - providing more information for parents and carers on how mathematics is taught in the school.
- Improve punctuality and raise attendance to at least 95% by the end of May 2011 by:
- increasing pupils' understanding of the importance of regular attendance through displays and assemblies, together with the greater use of incentives and rewards, including for those with improved attendance and for those whose attendance is above 95%
 - strengthening guidance to parents and carers, including those who are new to the school, about the importance of good punctuality and regular attendance
 - reviewing procedures to encourage better punctuality.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils make good progress in their learning in Key Stage 1. This continues in Key Stage 2, so that by the time pupils leave school, their attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average. Results are stronger in English than in mathematics. This is because there have been improvements in pupils' writing but also because more-able pupils are not always stretched enough in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress overall, and some make very good progress. These pupils and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, make good progress as a result of good teaching and the effective support by skilled additional adults. A good example of this was in an effective mathematics lesson for a lower-ability set of pupils in Years 5 and 6. A teaching assistant worked assiduously with pupils to explain carefully a complicated mathematical operation to them and where necessary provided good examples in their books. Pupils' skills in English are further developed by opportunities in other subjects for pupils to explain, discuss and write about their work. In a lesson on Mexican culture, where pupils were taking it in turns to complete tasks, pupils had to explain how well they had completed their task to their peers and also to point out the pitfalls they had encountered in their approach.

Pupils' outstanding spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is reflected in their very strong sense of spirituality which enables them to have a very good appreciation of, and respect for, the beliefs of others. It is also reflected in their good behaviour around school and their good attitudes towards each other. They have a strong sense of right and wrong, and a very good understanding of other cultures, which also reflects work within the curriculum about different regions of the world. Pupils feel safe in school. They are confident that when they have a concern, they know who to turn to and that it will be dealt with promptly. They listen well to instructions in class and work well together or independently when required to do so. They can explain well the benefits of a healthy lunch and of sporting activities.

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Pupils contribute well to their school's development. They have opportunities to be school councillors and older pupils assist younger pupils during wet play times. Others have contributed ideas to how the school buildings and grounds can be improved. Pupils raise funds for charity and have good links with the local community and parish. Attendance, however, is low and too many pupils arrive late for the start of the school day. Nonetheless, the average attainment of pupils and their good team-working skills, mean that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for future study and the world of work.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
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	4
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?

Teaching is good. Overall, teachers plan well for lessons and closely evaluate their effectiveness. These evaluations are then used well to inform future learning. Resources are prepared well for lessons and good explanations ensure that pupils understand clearly what they have to do. Questioning is used well to assess the progress pupils have made in their learning. The pace of teaching is good and expectations of what pupils can achieve are usually high, although this is not always the case in some mathematics lessons, where more able pupils are not challenged. Work is marked well. Marking systems are understood well by pupils and make clear to them, especially in English, what they must do in order to improve. For example, the 'pink slip' system ensures pupils know how to apply lessons they have learnt about writing in literacy lessons to their writing in other subjects.

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The curriculum is broad and balanced and has an appropriate focus on promoting pupils' basic skills. It is enriched by many varied extra-curricular activities, which are well attended. These include football, film and chess clubs. There is good range of educational trips and visitors to the school which enhances pupils' understanding of other cultures. The school cares very well for its pupils and this particularly helps new entrants, including those with English as an additional language, settle quickly into school routines. Support for pupils is effective, including that for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Additional adults provide good support to pupils in class and in small groups outside the classroom. Appropriate homework is set and additional classes are held in literacy and mathematics for older pupils to prepare them for statutory assessments.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team and staff have worked successfully to implement those actions identified at the last inspection and as a result of a recent Ofsted survey visit, that were deemed necessary to improve the school. Assessment procedures have been strengthened, particularly in English, and consequently the quality of pupils' writing has improved. The school tackles any form of discrimination robustly and most groups of pupils make similar progress in their learning, although in mathematics, more able pupils do not always make as much progress as they could.

A good level of training has been provided for additional adults who work in classes and with small groups of pupils. Pupils' work and teachers' planning are monitored regularly and systems to monitor the quality of teaching are satisfactory. Partnerships with other agencies are good, as are those with a local network of schools which has helped train staff and to which a number of staff make a good contribution.

Procedures for the safeguarding of pupils meet current requirements well. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. Pupils get on well together in the school but the school has not yet fully evaluated the impact of its work on community cohesion. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body provides a satisfactory level of support and challenge to the school and is working closely with the local authority to remedy some weaknesses in the school's budget. The sustained good outcomes for pupils show that the school provides good value for money.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Reception class with levels of skills and ability that are below what is expected for children of their age. Their skills in communication, language and literacy are particularly weak. Children make rapid progress, both in their learning and in their personal development. They enjoy school and play well together, for example, taking it in turns when they wish to use computers or toys. When asked to concentrate on their work, they do this well. Their behaviour is very good due to the high expectations of teachers and adults. Children's good progress is the result of outstanding teaching and good support by additional adults. During one play session, an additional adult worked with children at the sand tray, explaining carefully and demonstrating ideas about the capacity of different containers. There is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities and the latter move at a good pace.

Activities are well planned. Explanations about what children have to do are very clear and there is a strong focus on developing children's listening and speaking skills. A good example of this was when the teacher gave children very clear guidance about different activities they could choose and checked they had understood how to use them well. Questioning is used well to develop children's thinking about different areas of learning, such as counting skills. One child was asked how many more children were allowed to play in the 'Wizard's Den' and was given enough time to work out the correct answer.

The indoor area is brightly decorated and reflects well the different areas of learning. However, opportunities for children to play outdoors and move freely in and out of the outdoor area are satisfactory. Its limited size restricts the regular use of large toys and some activities. Both teachers and additional adults assess and record children's progress continually. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led well. There are good links with parents and carers, effective arrangements for when children transfer into Key Stage 1, and staff work well as a team.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who returned questionnaires were supportive of the school's work. A few thought that the school did not deal well with unacceptable behaviour and that their child was not making enough progress. Inspectors found that the school deals well with poor behaviour and that, overall, the progress pupils make is good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Our Lady of Good Help 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 38 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 156 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	66	13	34	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	68	12	32	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	16	42	21	55	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	53	15	39	3	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	50	19	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	34	23	61	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	42	19	50	2	5	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)	12	32	24	63	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	45	18	47	3	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	39	15	39	5	13	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	37	19	50	3	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	15	39	19	50	2	5	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	63	11	29	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.



26 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady of Good Help Catholic Primary School, Liverpool, L15 8JL

Thank you for being so kind and polite when we inspected your school recently. It is a good school and some of the best things we found were that:

- your behaviour is good
- your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding
- you are very well cared for by the adults at your school
- you know how to keep healthy
- you make good progress in your learning
- you are well taught by your teachers
- the school is well led by its leaders and managers.

We have asked the headteacher, governing body and staff to make some improvements to the school. We would like them to raise standards in mathematics by making sure that all of you receive work that stretches and challenges you. We also would like the school to have more displays around the school about mathematics and to give you more information about how you can get better in this subject. We have also asked the school to improve the attendance and punctuality of some of you, by explaining in more detail to you and your parents and carers about how important it is for you to come to school every day and on time. You can help in this, by making sure you come to school every day and by arriving on time for the start of school. Remember, the first minute of the school day is as important as the last minute of the school day.

Once again, many thanks for being so polite and helpful when we inspected your school.

Yours sincerely

Michael McIlroy

Her Majesty's Inspector

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