

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106346
Local Authority	Trafford
Inspection number	355937
Inspection dates	16–17 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Brian Dower

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	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Joe Moore
Headteacher	Mr Paul Gibbons
Date of previous school inspection	22 April 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited seven lessons and observed the work of seven teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including pupils' books, monitoring and assessment records, school improvement planning and curriculum and lesson plans. Thirty completed questionnaire returns from parents and carers were analysed, together with a sample from pupils and staff.

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

- How well pupils who joined the school part way through Key Stage 2, progress.
- The degree to which pupils write clearly and present their work well in different contexts.
- The extent to which pupils' views influence the way they are taught.
- How effective partnerships are in promoting pupils' academic and personal development.
- How accurate the school's evaluation is of the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in relation to how much progress children make.

Information about the school

The school is similar in size compared to others of the same type. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average; that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Most pupils are White British. A very small number are from minority ethnic backgrounds, a few of whom speak English as an additional language. The characteristics of the school changed significantly in 2008 when it admitted a large number of pupils into Key Stage 2 from another school which closed. There have been a number of admissions from other schools. The school has several awards, including Healthy School status and the Activemark.

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. Attainment is average. Progress and achievement are good. The quality of the care, guidance and support provided for pupils is outstanding.

Pupils spoke about how safe they feel in school. They said that bullying is uncommon and that rare instances are dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils receive good guidance on how to be safe on the internet. They understand how to stay fit and well by eating healthy lunches and taking plenty of exercise. Older pupils take on a range of responsibilities in school, including helping to care for the younger ones as mentors. Suggestions from the 'learning detectives' on improving the teaching and learning of topic work have been taken up. Pupils are involved in a range of local community activities covering sport, culture and environmental projects.

Teachers know the pupils well and effectively tailor provision to meet their needs. This is particularly apparent in the high quality care, guidance and support provided, enabling all groups to make the same good progress. There are instances of potentially vulnerable pupils making exceptional progress in their personal development. Pupils' relationships with each other and with adults are mutually respectful, underpinning the cohesive nature of the school. The good curriculum has been broadened through the development of a wide range of enrichment activities which make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development and their enjoyment of school.

The teaching seen was predominantly good. The learning environment is stimulating. Good use is being made of information and communication technology to encourage independent learning. There are inconsistencies in the effectiveness of teachers' marking. Improvement targets are not being used consistently to guide pupils on how to improve and it is not always made clear how key pieces of work can be improved. Pupils' presentation of work sometimes lacks clarity and coherence, and there are occasions when a minority of pupils fail to complete the work set.

Self-evaluation is accurate. There has been a rise in attainment at Key Stage 1 and improved provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In Year 6, attainment is rising and progress accelerating compared with the performance of pupils in this year group over recent years. There has been the successful integration of pupils from other schools, resulting in their good progress. The school is clear about the way ahead, with appropriate development priorities in forward planning. The school's capacity to improve further is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Devise and implement consistently across the school a common approach to improving the presentation of pupils' written work so that:

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- - it is set out clearly and logically
- - where appropriate, it is illustrated with carefully executed charts, diagrams and sketches
- - it is presented in one written form, pencil or ink, and carries headings and dates.
- Ensure that all pupils are given individual improvement targets to help them raise the quality of their work.
- Improve teachers' marking so that:
 - - in key pieces of work it evaluates pupils' progress against their individual improvement targets
 - - it provides at least one pointer for improvement related to pupils' individual targets
 - - work is praised only when justified.

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

Pupils enjoy their work. All groups make good progress and achieve well, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who joined the school part way through a key stage and those few from a minority ethnic heritage. Although attainment on entry to the school varies, overall it is below expectations. Pupils' work in lessons and in their books shows that most pupils' attainment is at the nationally expected levels. The school's assessment records and the work seen in Year 6, indicate that pupils' current attainment is above average.

Pupils behave well and their attendance is average and improving. They have good basic skills and use these flexibly and well across subjects. This was seen in the work of Year 5 pupils who, in their morning literacy lesson, were preparing coaching instructions for Year 3 on how to play basketball. In the afternoon, in the joint Year 5 and Year 3 physical education lesson, the older pupils were developing their leadership and communication skills well and the younger ones were effectively learning coordination and team skills. The lesson also fostered self-confidence and independent working. There is a minority of pupils who struggle to present their written work well and lack the ability to use appropriate illustrative devices when the need arises. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with their spiritual and moral awareness being the strongest elements. The vast majority of pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education because they are punctual to school, work well in lessons, cooperate effectively in teams and persevere with tasks.

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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	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	2
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?

Teachers have good subject knowledge. Despite some limitations in teachers' marking, teachers' overall use of assessment to support pupils' learning is good. They make effective use of assessment to set suitably challenging and enjoyable learning activities for all groups. They and the teaching assistants monitor learning closely in lessons, responding quickly when difficulties arise and giving hints on how to tackle them without stifling independent working. Pupils have, therefore, to think through problems for themselves. Harmonious working was seen in all classrooms. Effective marking was seen in the 'Big Write' folders and in topic books. There are many instances, however, where improvement targets are not being used to raise attainment and where the marking does not evaluate progress against them when they are used. Some key pieces of work contain no guidance on how to improve and there are occasions when mediocre work, resulting from a lack of effort, is praised. Pupils' views on how topic work can be developed to match their learning styles have been taken up and, as a result, this thematic approach is adding to pupils' interest in and enjoyment of their work. The wealth of opportunities for personal development, through extensive enrichment activities outside of lessons, is a strength in the curriculum.

Pupils say that they are known as individuals and that they have every confidence in the staff to help them with problems. There is a small minority who are potentially vulnerable because they lack emotional maturity and resilience. However, they make the same good

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progress as others in their academic and personal development because of the highly effective care and support they receive from the school and a range of outside agencies.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, have high expectations of pupils and are particularly effective in providing for those who are potentially vulnerable. As a result these pupils grow in confidence and become self-reliant learners. The drive for improvement is also seen in the way that those pupils joining from other schools are quickly integrated, enabling them to make good academic progress. This is testimony to how effective the school is in ensuring an equal chance for every pupil and breaking down barriers to learning. Members of the governing body know the school well and work closely with senior leaders in establishing appropriate and challenging performance targets for further improvement. They balance support and encouragement for the work the school does with a close monitoring of performance.

The school's contribution to cohesion in the local and wider community is rigorously evaluated and promoted well. This is seen in the work done on extended services to enable parents and carers to support their children's education. It is also evident in the close links with community groups and with agencies to broaden the curriculum and promote pupils' well-being. Safeguarding procedures are well established and fully meet requirements, and safe working is evident in daily routines. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe because of the prominence given to such matters in the curriculum. 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	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

When they start school, children's skills vary but overall are below expectation. They settle quickly into the carefully structured routines and are soon happy and secure. Progress is good and by the time children start in Year 1 attainment is broadly average, except in writing, which remains an area for improvement. They learn and play well together. They work independently, making choices about what they will do from a wide range of suitably challenging and enjoyable learning activities. The theatre puppet show, construction sets, mask making and clay modelling were popular choices in the lessons seen, and added greatly to children's enjoyment of learning. Staff are highly effective in supporting children's learning and development. They ensure there is an appropriate balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff have a good understanding of the development needs of such young children. Their accurate assessments of the progress children make and their careful observations are used well to plan the next steps in learning and to ensure children's safety and well-being in all activities. Appropriate routines are in place to promote hygiene and self-care. There are close and effective links with parents and carers and with external agencies to support children in their development. This key stage is led and managed well.

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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:	
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

A very small minority of parents and carers submitted completed questionnaire returns. Of these, almost all were entirely supportive of the school and expressed appreciation of all the school does for their children. A few of these returns recorded a concern that unacceptable behaviour was not managed effectively. Inspectors looked at behaviour in lessons and around the school, they spoke to pupils and they examined the school's incident logs. They found that behaviour is good and that the very few pupils who find school routines difficult to adapt to, are managed well and do not disrupt the learning of others.

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 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 30 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 210 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	67	10	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	17	57	11	37	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	17	57	12	40	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	47	14	47	2	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	53	13	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	47	14	47	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	37	17	57	1	3	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	40	17	57	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	50	12	40	2	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	47	11	37	3	10	2	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	33	15	50	2	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	47	14	47	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	53	11	37	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.



18 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School Manchester M31 4PJ

Thank you for the warm welcome we received when we inspected your school. We had an interesting two days and were particularly grateful to those of you who gave time to talk with us. You made a valuable contribution to the inspection.

We found that yours is a good school and that the care and support you receive is excellent. This enables all pupils to make good progress in their work and in their personal development. Your behaviour is good and you get on well together. You told us how much you enjoy school and in particular the many interesting activities outside of lessons. You also said that the adults are always ready to help you with any problems and that, as a result, you feel safe and happy in school.

You have helped your teachers to develop the curriculum by suggesting ways in which topic work could be made more interesting. You also make a valuable contribution to the local community through your environmental work. We saw many good lessons. I was very impressed with the work done by Year 5 in teaching basketball skills to Year 3. Year 5 clearly rose to the challenge of providing coaching, and Year 3 enjoyed learning from other pupils.

There are always things to do to make any school better. We have asked that teachers make more use of targets to help you improve and give you written advice on how to achieve them. We have also asked that you be helped to present your work more clearly and, when needed, to use diagrams and charts to illustrate it.

Thank you again for making our visit so enjoyable. Our best wishes to you all.

Yours sincerely

Mr Brian Dower

Lead inspector

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