

# Our Lady's RC Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100048
<b>Local Authority</b>	Camden
<b>Inspection number</b>	354211
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 December 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Bradley Simmons HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	173
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Margaret Harvey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Juliette Jackson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 November 2009
<b>School address</b>	Pratt Street Camden London NW1 0DP
<b>Telephone number</b>	0207 485 7997
<b>Fax number</b>	0207 428 9426
<b>Email address</b>	head@ourladys.camden.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 December 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	354211

---

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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majestys Inspectors. Inspectors carried out 15 lesson observations covering nine teachers and two teaching assistants. They met with senior leaders, staff, a group of pupils, members of the governing body, a parents focus group and a senior officer from the local authority. They looked at pupils exercise books, reading records, school data about pupils attainment and progress, monitoring records, safeguarding and child protection documentation, and the school improvement plan.

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

Whether the school is now providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils.

The extent to which leaders at each level play their part in monitoring the work of the school and to what degree they are held accountable for their responsibilities.

Whether teaching and assessment are now consistently of sufficiently high quality to enable all pupils to make satisfactory and increasingly better progress, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.

## Information about the school

Our Ladys RC Primary is a one form entry school which admits up to 30 pupils each year. It is smaller than the average primary school. It shares the management of its Nursery class with the co-located St Michaels CE School. Just over half of the schools pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, a proportion that has grown over recent years. The large majority of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, although no one group predominates. Just over half of all pupils speak English as an additional language. The school has a small number of Traveller pupils.

At the time of its previous full inspection in November 2009, Our Ladys School was deemed to require special measures. As a result of this, the local authority engineered a collaboration with St Eugene de Mazonod RC School. The headteacher of that school became executive headteacher of Our Ladys in January 2010. The two schools entered a soft federation arrangement in July 2010.

**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**

**2**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that Our Lady's RC Primary School no longer requires special measures. It is a satisfactory school which is on a trajectory of improvement towards becoming good in the very near future. Such rapid improvement has been the direct result of the excellent collaboration with St Eugene de Mazonod RC School. Pupils' achievement is now satisfactory and, in 2010, they attained standards in line with national average in English and mathematics.

A year ago, although the school was a safe, caring and welcoming place, too much teaching across the school was inadequate. As a result, the majority of pupils were making no better than slow progress. In January 2010, the executive headteacher brought her deep understanding of pedagogy to Our Lady's. Her clear exemplification of what constitutes good and outstanding teaching, combined with her refusal to accept low standards, has led to teachers developing a clear understanding of what they need to do to raise their game. Teaching is now always satisfactory, often good, and occasionally outstanding. Pupils know where to find their targets in writing and mathematics and some can discuss the practical steps they need to take to achieve them. However, it is rare to hear these targets discussed during lessons. This means that they are not at the front of pupils' minds as they work and so, although a welcome innovation, they are not yet having the best impact on pupils' progress. Parents describe their children's new-found interest and enthusiasm for school; it is clear that teachers are working hard to involve pupils of differing ability groups throughout each lesson. At times, though, pupils' attention quietly drifts because the teachers' exposition is too long and pupils are not challenged by good questioning to participate. Occasionally also, teachers rely too heavily on a few individuals to answer questions.

The school is to be congratulated on the improvement of the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) for early reading and writing. This is now securely sound. The impact is already to be seen in reading results and in pupils' writing which shows growing accuracy and confidence. The assessment of individuals' phonic knowledge, although improved, remains insufficiently diagnostic, particularly for those pupils who have ground to make up, or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The executive headteacher empowers other leaders to drive forward improvement. A clear example is the work of the head of school to improve provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Provision for these pupils is now more accurately geared to meeting their needs and is monitored frequently to test its impact. The school's good capacity for further improvement is evidenced by leaders' acute and accurate understanding of the performance of the school in different areas and of well-founded plans for improvement. It is further demonstrated by rising standards in each year group

**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

and by growing parental confidence in the school. One parent, who had started his second child at another school, told HMI that he was keen to transfer the child to Our Ladys. Inspectors believe such growing confidence is rightly placed.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- The pupils could improve further by:
  - Maximise the impact of pupils targets on their progress by ensuring that teachers discuss these with pupils at opportune moments during lessons.
  - Embed newly developed questioning strategies so that more pupils are actively engaged in learning for a greater proportion of each lesson.
  - Improve pupils reading and writing skills, and particularly those of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, by undertaking regular diagnostic assessments of individuals phonic knowledge and their ability to use this.
- 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**

During lessons, pupils show a growing pride in their work. They are generally productive; some are beginning to outstrip what might normally be expected in terms of the progress they make during lessons. Pupils show a greater interest in, and enthusiasm for, their learning than was the case a year ago. Some pupils find it difficult to articulate the learning objectives of an activity, talking instead about the activity itself. This reduces their ability to use and deepen their learning in other fields.

Progress for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, those from minority ethnic groups and those with English as an additional language is satisfactory and increasingly good, irrespective of whether they are boys or girls. There are a small number of White pupils who are vulnerable because their parents and carers are hard to reach. These pupils are making less progress than their peers, despite steps taken by the school to counter their vulnerability.

Pupils are adamant that they definitely feel safe at school. They are sociable and know the difference between right and wrong. Their behaviour is good, and they know that they can turn to trusted adults if things go wrong. They have good opportunities to reflect spiritually and individual pupils take charge of leading prayers in assembly; their spiritual development is strong. Pupils are very active during playtimes and a high proportion of them take advantage of the well-balanced and tasty school meals cooked on site. The school council plays an effective role, co-ordinating, for example, a planned giving campaign by pupils to support less fortunate children living in other parts of the world. The fact that pupils are attaining more highly by the time they leave the school is likely to give them a more secure and confident start at secondary school.

**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*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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?

The exceptional focus of the executive headteacher on improving teaching is reaping rich rewards for pupils. As a result of this focus, teachers are increasingly reflective about their practice. One parent said that they seemed to have become more expert. Teachers know what constitutes high quality teaching and they aim for this. Common planning formats are much more precise and are used increasingly effectively to devise lessons which match pupils varying abilities. Generally, teachers discuss the learning objective and success criteria of a lesson with pupils in child-friendly language. They use common school scripts to ensure that pupils behave well, and pay attention. Displays, often of pupils work, exemplify what constitutes high quality in various writing and mathematics, with the result that pupils have a much clearer view of the pathways to success. In some areas, for example phonics, teachers have developed a stronger subject knowledge which gives their teaching an infectious confidence. Assessment in marking has improved, but pupils do not have consistent opportunities to respond to this.

Across the curriculum, there are improvements. The school day has been most efficiently re-ordered to provide more useful and coherent chunks of time for pupils and teachers. There is evidence of burgeoning cross-curricular work which is supporting pupils skills in literacy in particular. One very positive feature within this is the Mantle of the Expert presentation that pupils devise when they complete a topic. Not only does this allow them to develop essential but often overlooked presentation skills, but they have a purposeful

**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

framework within which to hone their information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Over the past year, the school has rightly prioritised the curriculum in English, mathematics and ICT to good effect. Unsurprisingly, therefore, although there is a useful whole-school curriculum map which ensures that content is not repeated, progression in pupils skills in subjects beyond these is not yet securely developed.

There are good systems in place to monitor vulnerable pupils and the school draws upon the work of other agencies effectively. Positive steps are taken at an early stage to attempt to involve hard-to-reach parents in their childrens learning and development. Interventions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have improved, and identification of such pupils is now more accurate. As one member of staff noted: We no longer miss the children who used to struggle on quietly. The school supports well parents and carers who want to train to get back into work by providing targeted places for their children at breakfast and after-school clubs. In addition, the school checks that those pupils who sometimes miss breakfast at home are fed on arrival at school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The executive headteacher has brought exceptional leadership and insightful pedagogical understanding to this school. She has very high expectations of herself and of those that work with her. She has been loyally supported in her work by the head of school. Teachers and pupils are now highly motivated. The school is outward facing. Parents and carers feel they have been enskilled to ask the right questions about their childrens education, and empowered to demand more of the school. Leaders and managers, including middle leaders, now routinely monitor the quality of provision across the school. There has been a transformation in governance which is now good. The governing body comprises experienced and hardworking individuals who have a sharp understanding of their role in holding the school to account. They have made some courageous decisions to facilitate the federation and deal effectively with the financial deficit. There are no clearly understood mechanisms beyond the complaints procedure for parents and carers to approach governors less formally.

Leaders use data wisely to determine and to tackle underperformance; the introduction of talk topics in the dining hall, and the commitment of a number of staff to eat with children in order to improve the speaking skills of a group of vulnerable children, is testament to the schools efficiency in tackling discrimination.

There are rigorous recruitment and vetting checks in place to ensure that children are properly safeguarded. Key personnel have a secure understanding of their role. In terms

**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

of community cohesion, the school has a clear sense of the community it serves. It has worked hard to engage its parents and carers. There are now clear and accurate reports to parents and carers and they feel welcomed by the school. Parents and carers appreciate the formal opportunity to talk to their childrens class teacher at the beginning and end of the school year, and would like a mid-year appointment, too. Pupils understanding of the diversity of faith in their locality is enhanced by visits to places of worship such as the Regents Park Mosque. Understandably, the schools improvement priorities have not yet allowed it to promote community cohesion meaningfully across the national and international dimensions.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Good improvement has been made across the Early Years Foundation Stage since the school was monitored by HMI in April 2010. This is particularly the case in the Nursery, where provision dipped for a period.

Children are now making satisfactory progress in their learning as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are settled and happy, and their emotional and physical needs are well met. Their social skills are developing well and they are learning to share, to take turns and to help each other. When directly supported by practitioners, children engage well in tasks and activities. In the Nursery, some children are at times slightly less focused and productive because some resources do not interest them or because practitioners have not drawn their attention sufficiently during whole-group sessions. In such instances, pupils lack brief guidance from practitioners, encouraging them to persevere. Nonetheless, childrens oral communication skills are developing securely.



**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

In both the Nursery and Reception classes, the six early learning curriculum areas are well represented in both the outdoors and the indoors. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, when provision in the outdoors was weak. Planning is increasingly effectively geared to building accurately on regular assessments of childrens abilities, skills and knowledge. Practitioners have worked effectively to involve parents and carers in contributing to these assessments and in making them accessible to them.

The new Nursery leader has been instrumental in improving Nursery provision in the past few months. She recognises the necessity to pay greater attention to detail in day-to-day practice and in policy implementation across the Nursery. The Reception leaders work to improve teaching and learning of early reading and writing is paying dividends within Reception and across Key Stage 1. A realistic action plan is in place to continue the good improvement seen in this area of the school.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
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 Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

## **Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire**

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

## 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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



17 December 2010

Dear Children

**Inspection of Our Ladys RC Primary, Camden, London NW1 0DP**

Thank you so much for the help you have given to me on my two visits to your school. Part of my job is to work with schools that require help to improve. I hope that you are pleased to learn that your school does not need me to visit again because Mrs Jackson and all the staff have worked so hard to make sure that every lesson counts for you.

During lessons now, you are making better progress. Lots of you are much more proud of your work than you used to be. You showed us your writing and reading targets. We think that these targets would help you even more if your teachers reminded you about them as you are working during lessons. We were pleased during some lessons to see your teachers ask as many as possible of you questions which made you think and kept you alert. We have asked your teachers to try to make sure they include you and keep you interested and listening by not talking for too long (although it is very important that you listen to the adults when they are talking) and by asking different sorts of questions to as many of you as possible during lessons.

We were really pleased to see that, in the Nursery and Reception, there are many activities for you to do outside, so you are learning more.

We talked to some of your parents and carers. They are very pleased with the changes at your school because they believe that your teachers expect the very best of you. This is now true. You need to say Well done! to Mrs Jackson, who has carefully planned and organised the improvements at your school, and give all the adults a big clap for helping her. Well done to all of you for playing your part in making your school a great place to be!

Yours sincerely

Bradley Simmons

Her Majesty's 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](http://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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**