

The Rosary Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103428
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	355381
Inspection dates	14–15 March 2011
Reporting inspector	David Driscoll

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	404
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Bernard Kelly
Headteacher	John Gubbins
Date of previous school inspection	6 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors, who observed 28 lessons taught by 17 different teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, parents and carers, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at records of pupils' progress and attendance, the school's development plan, records of checks on teaching and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils. They also analysed responses to questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and 105 parents and carers.

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

- To what degree have the apparent improvements in achievement in 2010 been maintained and built upon?
- Are pupils in Years 1 and 2 making as much progress as those in Years 3 to 6?
- How well are the most able pupils making progress in English in Years 3 to 6?
- How successful are the actions being taken to improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage?

Information about the school

This school is much larger than average. The majority of pupils come from a Pakistani background, with others coming from a wide range of different minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. A high proportion of these pupils have a statement of special educational needs, mostly relating to physical disabilities. The school holds the Leading Aspect Award for inclusion and the International Schools Award.

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

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school that has shown considerable improvement since it was last inspected. The school's senior managers have made good use of data to raise teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of. The range of methods used by managers at all levels to check the quality of teaching paint an accurate picture of its effectiveness, and identify clearly where improvements can be made. There are differences in the quality of teaching between key stages, but there is an improving picture across all of them. As a result, pupils now make good progress and their attainment on leaving Year 6 has risen to an average level. The improvements in achievement evident in 2010 are now firmly embedded. Accurate self-evaluation of all that the school provides leaves the school well placed to continue its improvement and build on its successes.

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are very low for their age, especially in terms of their language skills. They make good progress in some aspects of learning, such as their attitudes, emotional development and number work. However, their speaking skills remain underdeveloped by the time they start Year 1. Many speak only in single words. Teachers often give children too much help, such as saying words for them, rather than using questions to encourage children to speak for themselves and then giving children time to respond. One-word answers are sometimes accepted, without demonstrating how an answer should be given in a whole sentence. Relatively poor language skills are still apparent in Year 1, where pupils still answer questions in short sentences and are not always given the opportunity to explain the reasons for their answers. Pupils make steady progress in Years 1 and 2, but do not make the gains observed in Years 3 to 6 because the work is sometimes too easy for the most able in particular. Progress accelerates in Years 3 to 6, where the teaching is of better quality. Teachers have higher expectations and pupils respond well to their demands. The proportions of pupils who reach the higher Level 5 in mathematics and reading now match national averages, although in writing the proportion remains below average because the work given to the most- able pupils is not always challenging enough.

Most aspects of pupils' personal development are good, and some are outstanding. Pupils feel safe and secure, and have great confidence in staff to take any concerns seriously and act swiftly to resolve them. This view is strongly supported by parents and carers, who rightly praise the quality of care provided. Behaviour is good, both in and out of lessons, and pupils' manners are exemplary. They work well together and develop a good degree of independence. Pupils are reflective and sensitive to the needs of others. Their knowledge of other cultures and faiths is exceptional as a result of the school's outstanding provision for community cohesion.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate children's language development in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - making better use of questioning to encourage children to speak
 - giving children time to think about what they want to say and how to express themselves
 - providing children with better models of how to speak in full sentences.
- Improve the progress of pupils in Years 1 and 2 to the good level observed in Years 3 to 6 by:
 - ensuring work is better matched to the ability levels of individuals
 - encouraging pupils in Year 1 to speak at greater length and explain their thinking.
- Increase the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 in writing to at least the national average by ensuring that the most able pupils are always given suitably challenging tasks.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy coming to school, where they achieve well. Almost all groups are now making good progress, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The least-able pupils, including those with special educational needs relating to learning difficulties, make slightly better progress than the most able, because the school has an extensive system of extra classes, taught by qualified teachers, to help those whose attainment is initially below average to meet the national expectation for their age. There are examples of some individuals doing outstandingly well, especially those with a statement of special educational needs related to physical disabilities. The school has invested heavily in resources for such pupils and this has paid off by ensuring that they are fully integrated into the life of the school and are able to reach their potential. Other pupils benefit from working and playing alongside them, as they learn to see past differences to the person that lies beneath and develop sensitivity towards others. It also helps them to develop a very high degree of intolerance of discrimination, in whatever form it may take, so pupils from all the ethnic backgrounds represented in the school get on very well with one another.

Pupils are keen to do well and work hard in lessons. They concentrate on their tasks and rarely need a teacher's prompt to get down to work. Pupils cooperate well in groups. They discuss topics sensibly and make sure that everyone has a say in debates, respecting any differences in opinion. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are quick to volunteer to take notes or summarise the findings of the group. Pupils enjoy solving problems, especially those where there is a right or wrong answer such as in mathematics and science. They are confident users of computers in a wide range of different contexts, because teachers include their use in almost every lesson.

Pupils' contributions to the local community, through helping to tidy the area and putting up hanging baskets, for example, are valued. In school, pupils are quick to volunteer to take responsibility and play a good role in raising money for those less fortunate than themselves.

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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	3
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 get on well with their pupils and have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach. They use their knowledge well to explain concepts clearly so all pupils know what they are expected to do and achieve. Throughout the school, teachers are quick to spot any pupil who is struggling and to provide them with the extra support they need in order to tackle tasks successfully. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support those most in need of extra help. Their explanations are provided in more simple language and they give pupils time to think and respond. Learning mentors provide valuable and effective support to individuals with any personal difficulties, especially those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Good links with other schools and with parents and carers ensure that children settle quickly into the nursery and are well prepared for their transfer to secondary education.

The curriculum has improved considerably since the last inspection. Pupils are asked what they like and dislike, so that topics can be adapted according to their interests. This has led to greater engagement in lessons. Boys' reading has improved as they now read about comic strip characters, which they enjoy more than the previous stories they were asked to read. Good use is made of links with businesses to ensure pupils are well prepared for later life. The 'Apprentice' competition is very popular and teaches pupils about economics and entrepreneurialism. Pupils' cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. Pupils

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visit six different places of worship and schools in other areas to find out how people from different backgrounds live their lives. Strong links with communities in other countries have led to the school being granted the International Schools Award. The breakfast club is very popular and provides the pupils who attend with a healthy start to the school day.

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 headteacher provides strong leadership that has developed a shared commitment to improvement among staff. Data from assessments are used well to identify where improvements need to be made. The priorities in the school development plan are well rooted in raising achievement and the actions to address them are proving successful. There are now only small gaps in performance between different groups of pupils and those between key stages are reducing as a result of the school's good provision for equality, which includes zero tolerance of discrimination. Members of the governing body play a good part in seeking the views of parents and carers, and ensuring that they are reflected in the school's priorities. Their visits to lessons allow them to gain an honest and accurate picture of what the school provides. Parents and carers are now much more confident in coming into school. They have been encouraged by the range of workshops offered, which also help them to understand what is being taught and how they can help their children learn at school. They are full of praise for all that the school provides. The governing body ensures that the school meets all requirements for safeguarding and goes well beyond that which is required in terms of ensuring that all staff are thoroughly trained and up to date in their understanding of any issues they may encounter.

The school's senior staff and members of the governing body have used their deep understanding of pupils' backgrounds exceptionally well to plan and provide for community cohesion. The pupils have an outstanding range of opportunities to engage with others from different backgrounds or circumstances. There are links with schools in Rwanda and Angola, as well as those in other parts of Great Britain where pupils take part in joint projects. The school takes full advantage of the rich diversity of backgrounds represented in the school to teach pupils about other faiths and cultures, and the impact is comprehensively evaluated by learning mentors. Most outstanding though is the link with a special school that allows pupils with physical disabilities to join The Rosary on short-term placements, and benefits all those involved. This link has been one of the most influential factors in the school being granted the Leading Aspect Award for inclusion.

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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	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make satisfactory progress in most areas of learning from their very low starting points. They feel happy and safe in the welcoming environment, where staff make good use of praise to encourage them. Staff provide good role models in the way they cooperate with one another, and this improves children's dispositions and attitudes as well as their behaviour. Children learn to follow routines and settle quickly to life at school. An appropriate balance between activities led by the teacher and those chosen by the children themselves helps children to develop independence. Assessments are broadly accurate, and are used appropriately to plan activities. A wide variety of activities is provided which are based on a single theme. This allows children to make links between the things they are learning about and consolidate their learning. Many activities contain a creative element, so children's creative development is a relative strength. The development of language skills is slower, and this holds children back in other areas of learning. Many know their numbers, for example, because they can repeat single words like 'one', 'two' and 'three'. However, their poor vocabulary then prevents them from talking about using numbers, and starting to add and take away.

Staff have a satisfactory and improving knowledge of national Early Years Foundation Stage requirements. The senior staff have a clear picture of the effectiveness of provision, and improvement forms a major part of the school development plan. There are good links with agencies and links with parents and carers are very positive, as reflected in the views they expressed in response to the questionnaire.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are very positive about all that the school provides. They hold views that are similar to those of inspectors. The very small number of individual concerns expressed were followed up by the inspection team, but followed no particular pattern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Rosary 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 105 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 404 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	62	59	42	40	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	64	61	39	37	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	58	55	45	43	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	53	50	46	44	4	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	50	48	53	50	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	48	46	55	52	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	51	49	52	50	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	44	42	53	50	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	49	47	47	45	3	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	51	49	52	50	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	42	49	47	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	56	53	43	41	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	63	60	41	39	1	1	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



16 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Rosary Catholic Primary School, Birmingham, B8 3SF

Many thanks for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. We found you to be polite, welcoming and well behaved. You told us how safe you all feel, because all the staff take good care of you and help when you have any problems. You go to a good school, where you learn well. Your knowledge of other cultures and how people live in different areas is especially good because the school is outstanding at giving you the opportunities to work and play with others who come from backgrounds different from your own. Some of you who have physical disabilities do very well indeed. This is because the school takes great care to ensure that you are involved in all aspects of the life of the school, and provide you with all the resources necessary to reach your full potential.

You work hard in lessons and concentrate well on your work. Your progress is quicker in Years 3 to 6 than it is in Years 1 and 2, and some of the most able among you do not make as much progress in your writing as you do in your reading and mathematics. So we have asked your teachers to make sure that you are always given work that is just hard enough for you to succeed with if you try your very best. You can help by working as quickly as possible and letting your teacher know as soon as you have finished. Some of the younger children are not learning to speak as quickly as they should so we have asked their teachers to make sure that they are shown how to speak in sentences and given every opportunity to talk.

Your school is getting better and better all the time. The headteacher and others who help to run the school know exactly what needs improving and what to do in order that it can provide the best possible education for all of you.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll
Lead inspector

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